

CyberScribe November 2012, number 206

One of the perennial stories that come from Egypt every now and again is a new note on the progress of the grand Egyptian Museum. Up till now the majority of the progress has mostly involved laboratories, storage facilities, and utilities, which has produced a large underground complex, but nothing that tourists can see.

Because of the problems in Egypt, no one can accurately estimate the date that this wonderful new Museum may open, but a new website has just appeared with glorious artist's renditions of what the museum may look like when it is completed. Anyone interested should go to this site: <http://www.gem.gov.eg>

Are some pictures from the site that should be tantalizing for anyone interested in Egypt.





Although Halloween has already passed, a pair of on stories appeared too late to put into the October issue. I think the readers of this column will have fun with them anyway, so here they are.

The first spooky incident to report occurred at the Robert and Francis Fullerton museum of Art at Cal State San Bernardino. The staff was in the process of removing one display and replacing it with items from the permanent collection when something very odd occurred. An Internet site called "Contracostatimes" ([tinyurl.com/ceaud9l](http://tinyurl.com/ceaud9l)) replacing it wrote this article (condensed here). The CyberScribe hopes you enjoy it.

'They had recently removed a traveling exhibit of Egyptian antiquities from one gallery and were due to open up a new display from their permanent collection in less than two and a half hours. And camera No. 8 was on...

'Sitting on a display stand in one corner, while its mount waits to get touched up with paint, is item number EG.02.007.2003, a "naturalistic mummy mask" about 10 inches long, a plaster mask of an unknown Egyptian woman, painted to add realistic features. It was created in the second century A.D., when the Romans ruled Egypt, when mummification was still practiced on both native Egyptians and wealthy foreigners.

'There was concern that the mask was taking up a slot where a squat statue of Bes, an Egyptian god that protects women during pregnancy, might need to go.

"We were talking about her and Bes and saying she'd be upset," museum director Eva Kirsch said.

'At 2:51 p.m., Security Camera 8's video shows the mask roll over onto its left cheek and then be hurled to the floor. No one was around it; Kirsch is visible in the video about 15 feet away, cleaning an item for another display.

'The mask's nose and chin were shattered, but the mask survived mostly intact.



"Nothing like this has remotely happened to us," Kirsch said. "There's no way that it could roll like this." But there's the video, showing exactly that, and showing that no one was interested in damaging the mask.

"Luckily, we do have the video to show that we were taking the high standard of care," said Andrea Callahan, development and PR coordinator for the museum.

'It's not the only time the case in the corner of the museum has been the site of strange occurrences - in 2010, a tiny amulet of Egyptian goddess Ta-weret twisted itself around backwards inside the locked case, although the rest of the contents remained undisturbed. And, museum staff said, visitors regularly say the corner is "creepy," even though they try to keep the story of what happened to the mask to themselves.

"It's time to get her fixed," Kirsch said. It's taken her three years to make plans to take the mask to Los Angeles for the extensive repairs it needs. "I'm reluctant to have her in the car with me."

The second spooky Egyptian theme occurred at the Museum of Antiquities at the University of Saskatchewan. Odd things have been reported over a long period of time, and because they are unexplained, the museum staff, with tongue firmly in cheek, described the events to supernatural forces.

A newspaper called "the Star Phoenix" ([tinyurl.com/cgxxzo7](http://tinyurl.com/cgxxzo7)) located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, told the story in this manner (abbreviated somewhat):



Tracene Harvey, Director/Curator at the Museum of Antiquities stands next to the Egyptian false door, which is a portal to the afterlife thought to be the cause of mysterious happenings in Room 116 in the College Building at the University of Saskatchewan. (Michelle Berg / Bridges)





Tracene Harvey, Director/Curator at the Museum of Antiquities stands by the replica of a tomb that adds to the eerie feeling of the potentially haunted Room 116 in the College Building at the University of Saskatchewan. (Michelle Berg / Bridges)

Tracene Harvey is the curator at the University of Saskatchewan's Museum of Antiquities. The small museum is located in the Peter MacKinnon Building (formerly the College Building), and hosts a trove of ancient artifacts. One of these artifacts may harbor some paranormal energy from the time of ancient Egypt.

"There's been a few odd things. We haven't seen anything or captured anything on camera yet," said Harvey.

She takes Bridges to see the artifact, a small example of an Egyptian "false door," which was believed to allow spirits to pass from one world to the next.

Q: What is the purpose of a false door?

A: It's a really fun artifact to take into consideration, especially when we're thinking about Halloween because, of course, Halloween is all about

mummies. They don't function like a physical door, but it was a portal, according to the Egyptians, between the realm of the living and the afterlife world of the dead. In Egyptian popular belief, when you die you more or less kept going as you would in your every day life while you were alive.

Q: What is the history of this particular door?

A: Our false door belonged to a woman named Irti. She was a priestess of the Egyptian Goddess Hathor. Hathor was a bovine goddess, so she's often depicted as a cow. Irti obviously had an important place in society as a priestess of this goddess. The date of the false door is 2,200 B.C., so the artifact is over 4,000 years old.

Q: How did you become aware the object might be haunted?

A: At first it was a funny "haha" thing, where if I had a file or something that went missing, you'd blame it on the false door. There's been a few really odd things, like stuff moving in the case. There are certain cases that have such fragile objects volunteers are not allowed in those cases without permission. There's been the odd thing that's moved and there's been no clear explanation of it. There could most definitely be explanations or causes, but there's the odd thing that just seems weird. Well, we do have a portal to the other world here at the museum. Maybe that's got something to do with it. And it's fun, especially around Halloween time. The students have a great time with that.

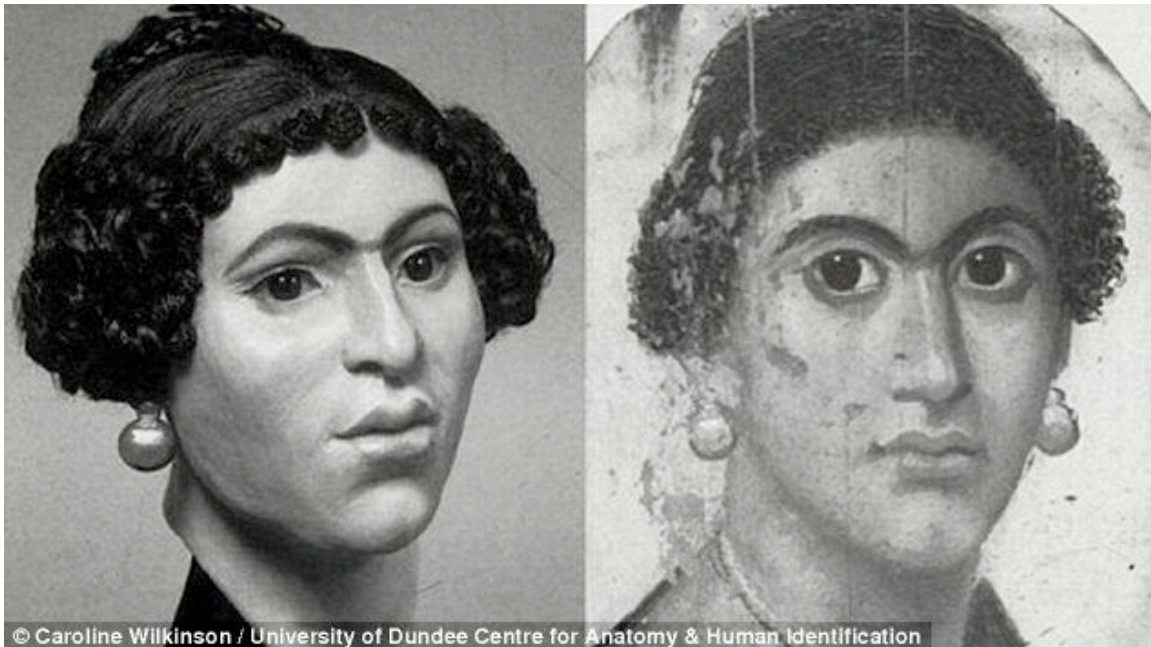
Bob Brier is an old friend of our chapter, and he is always clever and inventive, even though several times his projects have been highly controversial. The CyberScribe recalls his book where he supposedly solved the death of Tutankhamen, and his more recent search for imaginary tunnels inside the great pyramid.

This time he has done something very interesting in a project that tries to test how accurately the encaustic portraits found on Roman mummies

reflect the faces of the actual deceased person inside. An Internet site called the "Daily Mail reporter" ([tinyurl.com/c6o9pyx](http://tinyurl.com/c6o9pyx)) presented the results of his research and his rather spectacular discovery. His work was said to have been previously published in a journal called ZAS, which so far has not been located by the CyberScribe. Can anyone provide the reference? Read on...

'A study of mummy portraits, first published in the journal ZAS, has revealed the talents of 1st century A.D artists, even tweaking their features slightly to be more flattering.

'Egyptologist Bob Brier and his team from Long Island University used a CT scanner to produce physical models of the mummies' skulls which were then used by a crime artist to recreate their faces.



Remarkable similarity: A mummy from the British Museum was a small woman in her early 20s with delicate features, a narrow face and thick lips

It was a painstaking process that took several days per mummy but the results have proven it to be a success and Brier is keen to extend it to look at more mummies.

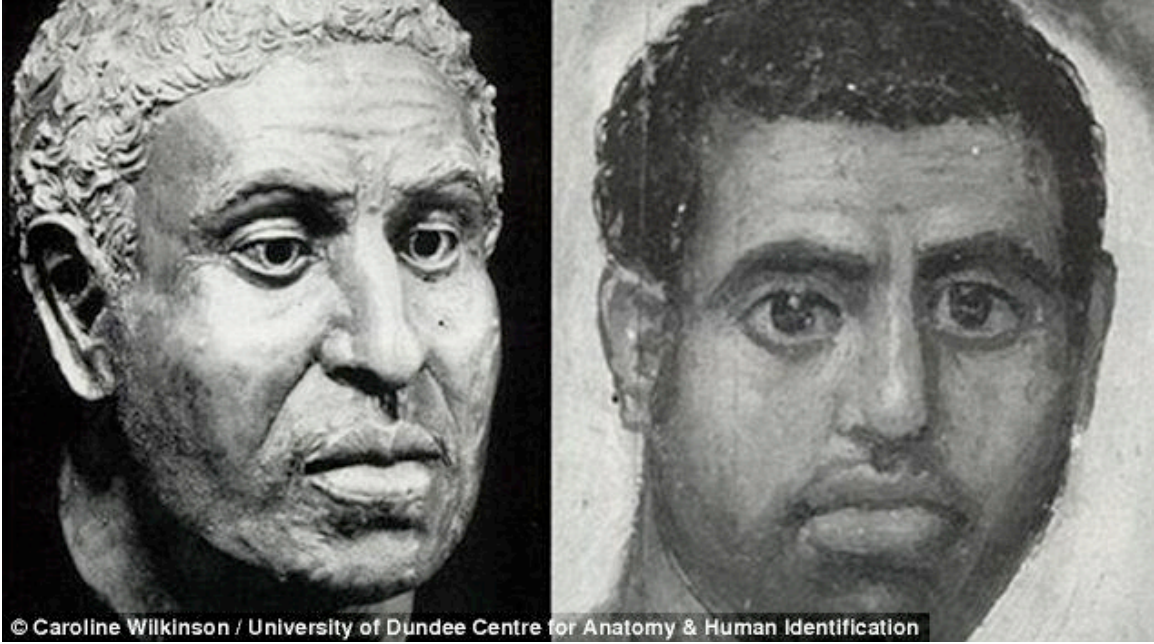


The difficulty is, however, that while there are more than 1,000 mummy portraits, less than 100 are still attached to the people they depict.

So much so that in one Brier initially thought it had been mistakenly paired with the wrong mummy.



A mummy from the Glyptotek Museum in Copenhagen was a young man in his 30s with a wide nose, broad cheekbones, thick lips and rounded jawline



This mummy from the British Museum was a large man in his 50s with a broad face, thick brow, flat nose, and heavy jaw. He looks a little younger in his portrait

‘It is possible that during the mummification procedure, when several bodies were being mummified at the same time, a mismatch occurred,’ Brier told ABC. But on closer inspection they noted enough similarities to be satisfied that it was in fact the right one.

‘Portraits of the mummies are surprisingly life-like, with accurately proportioned features.

‘They shed light on the purpose of the portraits and the study demonstrates the shift from symbolic art to realistic art after the Romans conquered Egypt in 30 B.C.



A mummy from the Glyptotek Museum in Copenhagen was a young man in his 30s with a wide nose, broad cheekbones, thick lips and rounded jawline

“This is a very sound manner of testing the hypothesis that the mummy portraits were made when the individual was alive,” said Salima Ikram, a professor of Egyptology at the American University in Cairo, who was not involved with the study.

“The difficulty is finding portraits that are still bound to the mummy. Many portraits were taken off the mummies and sold during the 19th century and early part of the 20th century.”

Perhaps some of you have seen a recent article describing the discovery of a new tomb built for a princess of the fifth Dynasty, who was the daughter of a previously unknown pharaoh with the unusual name of "Men Salbo", and who was immediately declared a great discovery of another previously invisible pharaoh.

The fun starts, however, when several Egyptologists spoke up on the Internet discussing the name of 'Men Salbo'. These comments below are

taken from an excellent discussion list run by Ayako Eyma, a good source for reliable information on Egypt. Because the writers may not wish to have their names made public, the CyberScribe will just extract the important parts of their comments. If anyone really needs to know those names, contact the CyberScribe.

First there was this remark: "This is fascinating. As I'm sure others will point out, the modern language here is Arabic. "men salbo" (with the emphatic "saad") literally means "from his loins", and the phrase is used the same way as the Ancient Egyptian in expressions of filiation."

And then: "If you translate "of his body" (nt Xt=f) into Arabic you would get 'min sulbuh' (the underscoring indicates that the s is an emphatic). So what seems to have happened is that the quite straightforward inscription on the column seems to have been filtered via Arabic (into Czech?) by someone whose knowledge of Arabic was imperfect."

In other words, there is no such king as 'Men Salbo'. What we have here is a mistranslation of a standard Egyptian relationship phrase which was translated first into Arabic, then into Czech, and then into English.

So what does it say? The actual name should be read, "Princess Sheret-Nebti, of his body", meaning that she is the actual physical daughter of a Pharaoh.

What fun we can have from poorly documented information and carelessly translated news articles.

The article below can be read in an abbreviated form from the "Daily Mail" ([tinyurl.com/bvh2ksx](http://tinyurl.com/bvh2ksx)), along with the associated photographs, makes an interesting presentation. It reads:

'A princess' tomb dating from about 2500 BC has been discovered near Cairo, the Egyptian government revealed today. The discovery was made in the Abu Sir region south of Cairo by a team of archeologists from Czechoslovakia.





‘We have discovered the antechamber to Princess Shert Nebti's tomb which contains four limestone pillars,’ Mohamed Ibrahim, Egypt's antiquities minister, said.





'The pillars 'have hieroglyphic inscriptions giving the princess's name and her titles, which include 'the daughter of the king Men Salbo and his lover venerated before God the all-powerful,' he added.



'Ibrahim said that the Czech Institute of Egyptology's mission, funded by the Charles University of Prague and directed by Miroslav Bartas, had made the discovery.



'The discovery of this tomb marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the sepulchres at Abu Sir and Saqqara,' Ibrahim said.'

At various times over the last few months, the CyberScribe has sadly been forced to call attention to Egyptian clerics who are calling for the destruction of all the wonderful statues in Egypt, claiming their existence

is offensive to Islam.

One might suggest that these clerics need to go back to their holy writings and look up the concept of 'Jahiliyyah'. This important doctrine states that "Jahiliyyah is an Islamic concept of "ignorance of divine guidance" or "the state of ignorance of the guidance from God" or "Days of Ignorance" referring to the condition in which Arabs found themselves in pre-Islamic Arabia, i.e. prior to the revelation of the Quran to Muhammad.

The importance of this concept is that the ancient Egyptians were exempt from the Islamic rules against images, because they were in a state of 'Jahiliyyah', or ignorance. The source of their ignorance is that they lived before the time of Mohammed and the origins of the Koran. The point of this is that the age Egyptians did what they did because they had not been enlightened by Islam, and therefore the statues were not offensive to Islam.

A very welcome article recently appeared in an Internet site called 'Egypt Independent' ([tinyurl.com/c4vbs2l](http://tinyurl.com/c4vbs2l)) in which a number of well-educated and reasonable Egyptian writers and clerics spoke out firmly against the concept that the ancient Egyptian statues were offensive to Islam. CyberScribe hopes that everyone will read the article, printed in its entirety below:



Amr Abdalla

'Intellectuals and writers have lashed out at Islamic preacher Youssef al-Badry's call to destroy statues because he considers them idols.

'The private Sada al-Balad news website had quoted Badry, a member of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, which is associated with the Endowments Ministry, as saying on Sunday that destroying the statues in Egypt is a religious duty to prevent sedition and the return to idol worship. Badry also noted that Prophet Mohamed destroyed the idols that were around the Kaaba in Mecca for that purpose.

'Intellectuals called Badry "ignorant" and Antiquities Minister Mohamed Ibrahim Ali said he only recognizes fatwas issued by Al-Azhar.

'Writer Gamal al-Ghitany called Badry's statements terrifying, saying, "It is expected, for the Muslim Brotherhood is now ruling." He added that Egypt has 60 percent of the world's antiquities and that calls like this would destroy tourism. "UNESCO should pressure the Brotherhood government not to allow such things."

'Please don't kill man's appreciation of art, writer Mahfouz Abdel Rahman said. "We will become cows if we lose that appreciation."

"The early Muslims did not do that," said writer Youssef al-Qaeed, contending that Badry was close to ousted President Hosni Mubarak and is now seeking some high post with the government by issuing such fatwas.

'He added that the whole world stood against Afghanistan when the Taliban destroyed Buddhist statues. "It made them think of rebuilding them," he said.

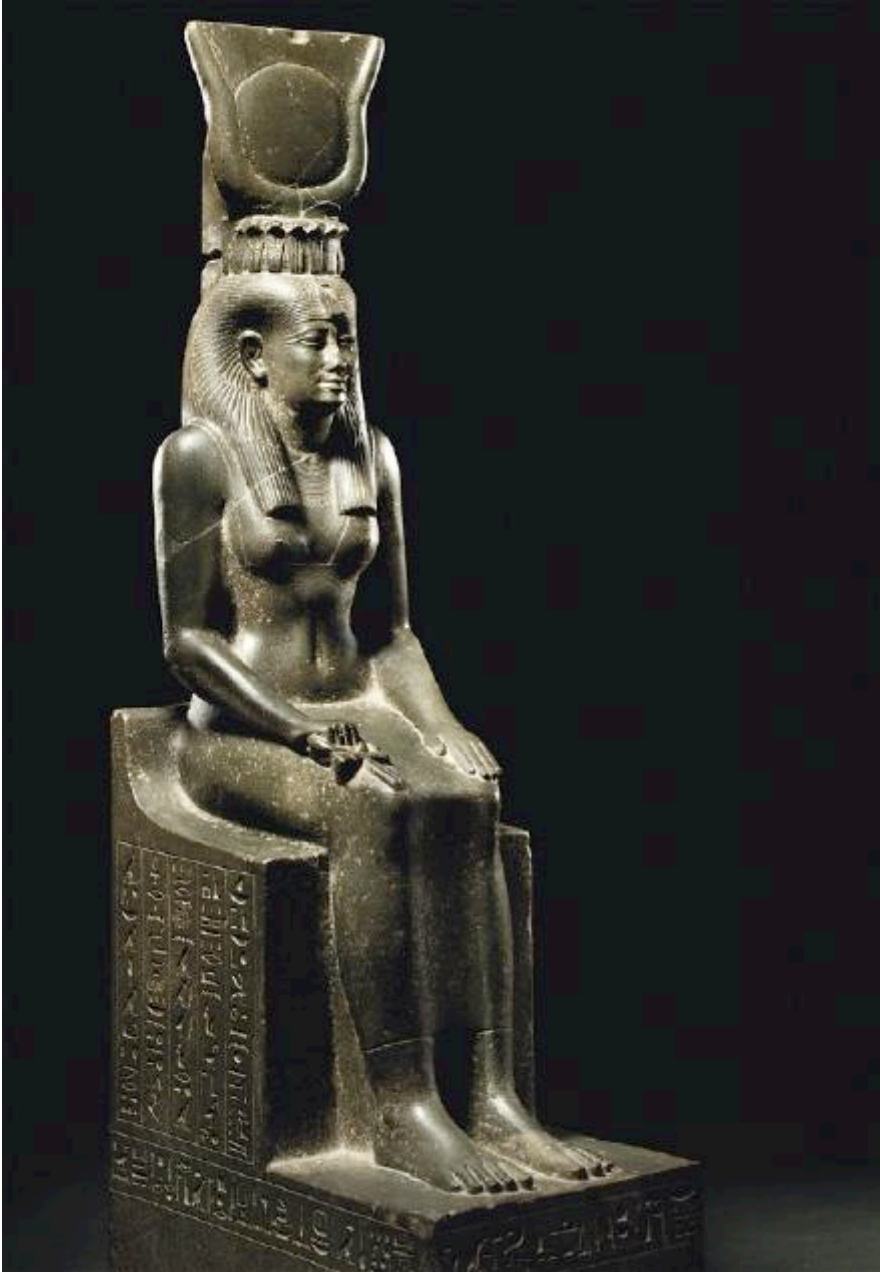
'Former Minister of Culture Gaber Asfour argued that the Brotherhood would not allow something like this to protect the tourism industry. "It is the other extremist groups that we should fear," he said.'

Edited translation from Al-Masry Al-Youm

A very interesting event occurred recently in the art world when an exceptionally beautiful 29-inch tall statue of the goddess Isis sold at Christie's auction house for the astounding sum of \$5,930,494 (£3.7 million British pounds). This is the highest price ever paid for an Egyptian artifact. Without doubt, the statue is exceptionally beautiful, but the price is staggering.

A brief article appeared in the newspaper "Telegraph" ([tinyurl.com/c666heg](http://tinyurl.com/c666heg)) and states (abbreviated slightly):





The statue of Isis, which was sold at Christie's

'A world record for an ancient Egyptian work of art was set at Christie's last week when a 29 inch sculpture of the goddess, Isis, dating from the Late Period Dynasty, c 664 - 525 BC, sold for £3.7 million (\$5.930,494). Made from dark sandstone, known as greywacke, it was probably used as a healing statue for those who wanted to call on the goddess's magical powers of protection.

'The price more than doubled the previous record for an Egyptian work of art set in 2005 when the Kimball Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, bought a smaller but older tomb sculpture of the magisterial Ka-Nefer and his family. Isis was bought by the London sculpture dealer, Daniel Katz, for his own private collection.'

The CyberScribe has access to the Christie's catalogs, which added these details:

'An Egyptian greywacke Isis late period, dynasty xxvi, circa 664-525 B.C. Depicted seated on a throne with legs together, her hands resting on her lap, an ankh-cross in her right hand, wearing a tripartite wig, overlaid by a vulture headdress holding shen-signs in each of its talons, and a frontal uraeus, the details finely incised, surmounted by a modius of uraei and a sun-disc between cow's horns, a broad collar with a row of pendant beads between the lappets of the wig, wearing a tightly fitted ankle-length halter-neck dress, her face with almond-shaped eyes, the rims raised and with extended cosmetic lines, the eyebrows in raised relief arching above, with a delicate straight nose and full lips pulled into a slight smile, the filtrum defined, with small rounded chin and large well-modeled ears, inscribed on four sides of the throne with a magical incantation for the Royal Acquaintance, Ptahirdis, True of voice, son of Wepwawetemsaf, begotten of Merptahites 28¾ in. (73 cm.) high.



'This statue gives her voice: "I am Isis, mistress of Khemmis, efficient of magical utterances in secret places. Geb has given to me his magical power to act as protection for Horus thereby. I know how to seal the mouth of every serpent, how to turn back every lion with [my] power on the desert, to act against crocodiles in the river, every reptile which bites in their holes. I shall repel the venom [...] I shall give air to the throat with the magical power".'

Continuing to examine art objects, a very unusual painting is being offered for sale in an auction by Sotheby's. It is a painting done by the very famous French artist, Jean-Léon Gérôme, depicting that famous historical moment when Cleopatra managed to get herself smuggled into the office

of Julius Caesar.



Jean-Léon Gérôme, French 1866. Cléopâtre et César

In the catalog, the painting is described (abbreviated) as:

‘The present work is one of two known preparatory oil paintings for the larger version *Cléopâtre et César* of 1866 (fig. 1). Several related drawings show Gérôme experimenting with the composition further. In some, Cleopatra is revealed lying on the opened rug, looking up as Caesar walks towards her. In the present work, Caesar looks up blandly from his desk, as if distracted and disturbed in his thought. This is much like in the finished version, except that there the pensive Caesar, still seated at his desk, looks up and holds his arms out in astonishment. In the finished version Gérôme also added Caesar's four secretaries. The setting is from a plate of the Temple of Deir el Medinah in the Napoleonic publication, *The*

## Description of Egypt.

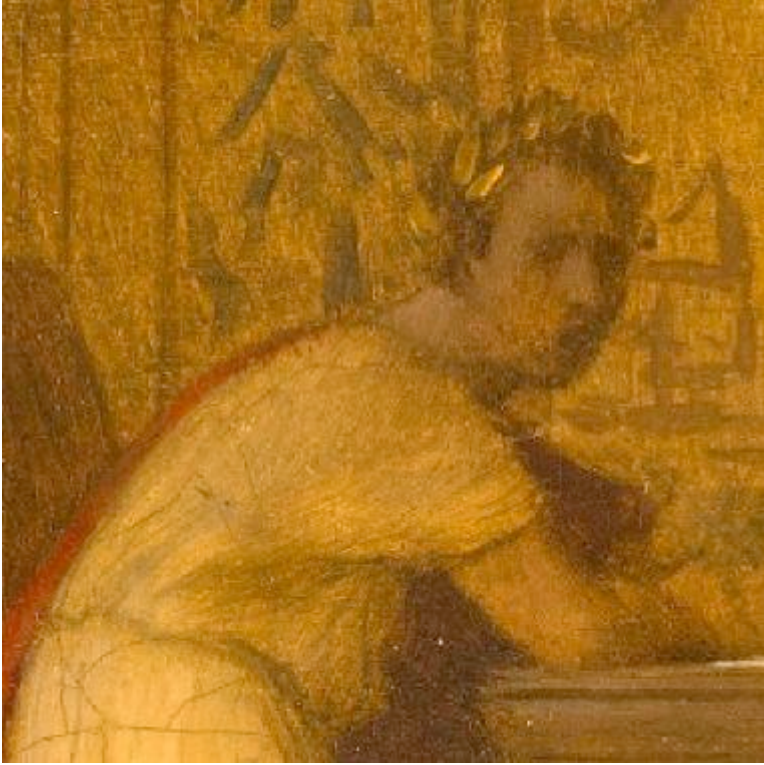
'Among the many references Gérôme incorporates into the present painting, is one to himself, in the form of the lion's head that decorates the clasp of Cleopatra's belt. His middle name being Léon, his association with a lion offered Gérôme a teasing opportunity for visual punning in his paintings, which often played on his own sense of sexual allure. In the present work the appearance of the lion's head to decorate Cleopatra's waistband seems suggestively appropriate given Madame de Paiva's proclivities.'

Those of you who have visited Egypt will immediately recognize Caesar's office as part of the Hathor Temple at Luxor, a place the CyberScribe doubts Caesar ever visited, and certainly never used it for an office.

In examining a close-up, the CyberScribe was highly amused by the look on Caesar's face. In no way does the face of Caesar resemble the many well-known portrait statues. The best that can be said is that he looks like a slack-jawed dolt and not a conqueror. The British line for this look is that he was quote "gob smacked".

Because the price is approximately \$100,000, the CyberScribe will not be among the bidders.





Those of you who follow recent discoveries related to the original colors of ancient statues will of course remember that the Greek statues have recently been demonstrated to have been brightly painted. The British Museum has recently published the results of one of those studies on a Roman period statue of the god Horus.

Faint traces of original color could be recognized and identified, and the colors were applied electronically to an image of the statue. To say the least, the color version is astonishing and not particularly appealing to the modern eye. This note was published in the British Museum's blog ([tinyurl.com/c7ht38y](http://tinyurl.com/c7ht38y)) and is presented below somewhat abbreviated:

“That’s one weird looking bird,” grinned an American student on one of my tours of the Ancient Egypt and Sudan Department study collection for university students last year. And to Egyptology students he is. And to students of Classical Archaeology too. But that’s rather the point. Roman Egypt (30 BC-AD 642) witnessed some of the most interesting, innovative and transformative combinations of traditions in the ancient world.

‘The god sits casually on his throne, one sandal-clad foot forward, his knees apart and draped in a garment. From the waist down, he could be any of a number of senior Olympian deities, or Roman emperors masquerading as such. He wears a feathered mail armor shirt that ends just above his elbows. His arms, now broken off, would have held symbols of power, perhaps an orb and scepter. His cloak, pushed back over his shoulders, is fastened with a circular broach. From the waist up, his costume belongs to military deities and, especially, Roman emperors, who were also worshipped in temples dedicated to them throughout the empire. The head, however, places us firmly in an Egyptian context.



Limestone sculpture of Horus from Roman Egypt

It's Horus, the sun god and divine representative of the living king in ancient Egyptian tradition. His head is that of a falcon, rendered in naturalistic style with the bird's distinctive facial markings articulated by the carving and also traces of paint. His eyes, however, are strangely human; instead of being placed on the sides of the head, like any 'real' bird, they are frontal, and his incised pupils tilt his gaze upward. In an

imaginative turn, the feathers of the falcon's neck blend into the scales of the mail shirt. In the top of his head is a hole, into which a (probably metal) crown once fit.

'Big Bird, as I think of him, has been off public display since 1996 when the gallery he was formerly displayed in was reconfigured to create the Great Court. The opportunity to get the sculpture on public display arose last year when the Gayer-Anderson cat was scheduled to travel to Paris, then Shetland, for exhibition. Big Bird would get his very own case at the top of a ramp, amid other sculpture more readily identifiable as 'Egyptian' in the British Museum Egyptian Sculpture Gallery.

'We also had a chance to identify some of the pigments that are apparent to the naked eye: his yellow arms, black pupils and 'eye-liner,' garments in two different shades of green, and his red and black throne. Using an innovative imaging technique, we were also able to detect the pigment used for his armor, and it turned out to be one of the most valued pigments of the ancient world, Egyptian blue.



The image on the right was taken with an infrared camera. The bright white areas show where traces of 'Egyptian blue' pigment survive





A color reconstruction based on pigment analysis suggests how the statue originally may have looked

'Horus - I should really stop thinking of him as Big Bird - will not go back into the study collection when the Gayer-Anderson cat returns..

The CyberScribe as those but this newsletter is getting a little lengthy, but he wishes to end with a somewhat silly article as usual.

This one follows the mythology associated with the day when the sunlight shines directly into the Temple of Abu Simbel and illuminates the statue of the Pharaoh, Ramses II. Many people take part in watching this unusual event, and a number of stories have arisen about the significance of this solar event.

The sunlight striking the statue on those particular days is of no interest whatsoever to Egyptology. When the sun gets low enough, there will be one day when it shines into the cavity, be it your bedroom window or an ancient temple, if oriented in a general East-West direction.

Here is a short note on the event and its supposed significance from the news source "Al Ahram - [tinyurl.com/c42xtm8](http://tinyurl.com/c42xtm8).):



Dawn breaks on statues of Pharaoh Ramses II (R) and Amun, the God of Light (L), in the inner sanctum of the temple of Abu Simbel (Photo: Reuters)

‘A phenomenon that happens twice a year in Aswan's Abu Simbel took place on Monday when the sun’s rays fell directly onto the King Ramses II temple to mark his birthday.

‘A solstice takes place each year between 20 and 22 February, when the king was crowned, and between 20 and 22 October, when he was born. In celebration of the historic moment, Abu Simbel hosted cultural shows and popular bands on Sunday and Monday. The celebration was attended by tourists and local officials.

‘Ahmed Abdullah, general manager of Abu Simbel and the Nubia temples, told the Al-Ahram Arabic website that the phenomena usually attracts more than 1,300 tourists from all over the world.

“Tourists who attend this unique event say it confirms that ancient Egyptians were pioneers in astrology,” he added.

‘According to Abdullah, this is one of 4,500 astronomical phenomena that were celebrated by ancient Egyptians.’

The short items below were written by people who truly understand what the Abu Simbel solstice and statue illumination really represent. If the tourists have a nice time and no one was really harmed, then perhaps the fact that the stories are false is not terribly important. According to legend the spring solstice marks the day of Ramses II birth, and the fall solstice marks the day of his coronation.

Read on:

That the days of illumination correspond to actual days in the life of Ramses is highly unlikely, says Leo Depuydt, an Egyptologist at Brown University.

"The Egyptian calendar was based on 365 days and while it was precise, the solar calendar is minutely different from year to year," says Depuydt, who adds that it is also difficult to know the precise date of the birth or coronation of Ramses II.

"Regardless of the alignment, if the temple faces East, the sun is going to shine in it twice a year," says Depuydt, who adds that "excitement is the key here—people are going to come to see the sun in the temple. But science is a different matter." (Source: National Geographic)

And also, from a source called 'VirtualTourist' ([tinyurl.com/d5xrt2y](http://tinyurl.com/d5xrt2y)):

These dates are allegedly the king's birthday and coronation day respectively, but there is no evidence to support this, though it is quite logical to assume that these dates had some relation to a great event, such as the jubilee celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the pharaoh's rule.

In fact, according to calculations made on the basis of the heliacal rising of the star Sirius (Sothis) and inscriptions found by archaeologists, this date must have been October 22. This image of the king was enhanced and revitalized by the energy of the solar star, and the deified Ramesses Great could take his place next to Amun Ra and Ra-Horakhty.

Due to the displacement of the temple and/or the accumulated drift of the Tropic of Cancer during the past 3,280 years, it is widely believed

that each of these two events has moved one day closer to the Solstice, so they would be occurring on October 22 and February 20 (60 days before and 60 days after the Solstice, respectively).

Therefore, whatever the reason for orienting the Temple at the time of Ramses, the solstice does not occur at the same day that it be a when he was here. So much for another myth!

See you here again next month!

The item below was found on the Internet, so it must be true!

# MAKER FOUND IN MYSTERY MUMMY!

Device made from copper & sand really worked, scientists say

By MIKE FOSTER  
Saqqara, Egypt

**X**-RAYs of that mysterious, bead-covered mummy recently found in a secret 2,500-year-old burial chamber have yielded a baffling new discovery: the mummy's chest cavity contains a pacemaker!

"This artifact is the greatest find in Egyptology in more than a century," declares Dr. James Hawkins, one of the first archaeologists to examine the gizmo and a close associate of the Australian team that found the mummy.

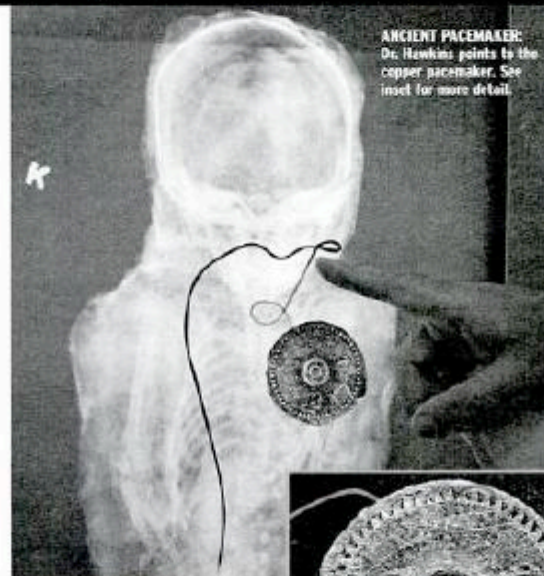
"The pacemaker is the most puzzling anachronism — our word for an object that exists before its supposed date of invention — since the discovery of the famous Antikythera mechanism."

The find has fueled wild speculation. Some Australian tabloids have sensationalized the story with headlines such as "New Proof of Time Travel" and "Mummy Mia! Did He Come from the Future?"

But Dr. Hawkins rejects such talk, pleading with more responsible publications like *Weekly World News* to resist jumping to conclusions.

"Egyptian medicine reached an extremely high level of sophistication," he points out. "Egyptian physicians successfully performed brain surgery and lifesaving operations such as tracheotomies.

"Patients were sedated by opiates. Local anesthesia was also used, including a solution made by the mixing of water with



ANCIENT PACEMAKER: Dr. Hawkins points to the copper pacemaker. See inset for more detail.

vinegar over Memphite stone — as well as a potent painkiller distilled from snake venom we've nicknamed 'asp-erin.'

"The *Kahun Gynecology Papyrus*, written in 1825 B.C., details the earliest known pregnancy test, in which women soaked a sample of barley and wheat with their urine. This not only worked, it even revealed the sex of the fetus!

"More to the point, the *Ebers Papyrus* accurately describes the position of the heart and major blood vessels and illustrates disorders such as irregular heartbeat.

"Of course, this copper pacemaker proves the Egyptians were even more advanced than we imagined."



Egyptologists found the mummy's burial chamber by accident March 2 after stumbling onto a door hidden behind a statue in a much older tomb belonging to a tutor of the 6th Dynasty King Pepi II.

Strangely, the mummy was swathed in turquoise beads and bound in strips of black linen instead of the more familiar "toilet paper" white

Egypt's chief archaeologist

Zahi Hawass excitedly declared it "one of the best-preserved mummies ever" and announced that scientists would commence CT scans to learn about its medical condition.

What those scans, conducted in late March, revealed is mind-boggling: A primitive pacemaker about the size of a pocket watch.

"Cardiologists are firmly convinced the pacemaker worked, because the mummy is that of a man who lived into his 80s," says Dr. Hawkins.

"Like the devices modern-day surgeons implant, it appears to have been used to treat a dangerously slow heart-beat."

Incredibly, the Egyptian pacemaker even includes a primitive battery.

"The battery consists of a tiny clay jar containing a copper cylinder made of a rolled-up copper sheet, capped at both ends, which in turn covers an iron rod," reveals Dr. Hawkins.

"Amazingly, the pacemaker also boasts a cleverly designed 'backup system' powered by motion like some of those fancy Swiss watches."

Thin copper wires traveled to the heart to deliver the needed electrical impulse, scientists say.

"Sand is packed into the device, presumably to serve as a shock absorber," the expert reveals.

Scientists are now examining two other mummies found in the tomb.

"Who knows, we may come across a penile implant," chuckles Dr. Hawkins.