



Berlin 27.8.2012

PRESS RELEASE

Museumsinsel (Museum Island Berlin)

Neues Museum (New Museum)

Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung (Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection)

Announcement of the exhibition

In the Light of Amarna - 100 Years of the Find of Nefertiti

7 December 2012 to 13 April 2013

On the 6 December 1912 the bust of Queen Nefertiti was excavated in Tell el-Amarna. To mark this anniversary 100 years later the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (National Museums in Berlin) will be presenting a special exhibition not only on that famous bust but also to illuminate all aspects of the fascinating Amarna period. "In the Light of Amarna - 100 years of the Find of Nefertiti" will be on display in the Neues Museum from 7 December 2012 to 13 April 2013. The exhibition focuses on never seen before discoveries from the collections of the Berlin museum, supplemented by loans from other museums abroad.

The name 'Amarna' refers to the ruins of the ancient Egyptian city of Akhetaton, which today is known as Tell el-Amarna. This city was founded by Pharaoh Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV, 1351 – 1334 BC) in order to establish a new capital with places of worship for his own 'religion of light', whose sole deity was the god Aton. The city was built in a short time and populated around 1346 BC. In the course of the gradual recollection on old religious tradition under Tutanchamun, Achet-Aton was slowly abandoned around 1331 BC. At the beginning of the 20th century, extremely successful excavations took place in Tell el-Amarna under the direction of Ludwig Borchardt and supported by the patron James Simon. Amongst the 7,000 and 10,000 archaeological objects was this colourful bust of Queen Nefertiti. In the course of the then customary sharing of finds between the „Service des Antiquités“ (Cairo) and the excavators approx. 5,500 objects made their way to Berlin.

The era of the royal couple Akhenaten and Nefertiti is brought to life by approx. 600 exhibits in their cultural-historical context. Not only the frequently examined aspects of art and theology of that period are focused on, but also the everyday life in the metropolis is placed at the centre of attention. The exhibition illuminates the archaeological issues of the excavation of the bust of Nefertiti and its find context in the sculpture workshop of the ancient Egyptian craftsman Thutmose. Along with the exhibition's main focus on archaeology it also investigates the history of the depiction of the bust of Nefertiti both as an archaeological object and as a widely marketed ideal of beauty.

So far only key objects have been exhibited such as the famous model heads made of stucco and some sculptures. Most of them have not yet been scientifically restored or studied even to this day. For the anniversary exhibition "In the Light of Amarna - 100 Years of the Find of Nefertiti" many exhibits are being refurbished: ceramics, jewellery, inlays, fragments of statues and architectural elements will be painstakingly restored and in some cases expanded upon using additions and models, offering



GENERALDIREKTION
PRESSE – KOMMUNIKATION – SPONSORING

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG
ABTEILUNGSLEITERIN

kommunikation@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum

ANNE SCHÄFER-JUNKER
PRESSE

Telefon: +49 30 266-42 34 02
Telefax: +49 30 266-42 34 09

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/presse

www.imlichtvonamarna.de



visitors a deeper and more vivid understanding of the city, its buildings and its residents.

One of these restoration items is the preparation of the bust of Pharaoh Akhenaten: In December 1912 Ludwig Borchardt managed the sensational extraction of numerous fragments of stone statues as well as portrait-like sculptures made of plaster, among them the famous colourful bust of Queen Nefertiti. At the same occasion he also excavated a picture of her husband, Pharaoh Akhenaten, that in size and design equals that of the bust of Queen Nefertiti. Not much is left of the royal bust's former glory as it was found broken into several pieces. The vandalism of the royal face in the antiquity can be traced back to the persecution and ostracisation as a heretic of the religious founder Akhenaten. After the restorative configuration of the fragments in 1913 a picture of an exquisitely crafted piece of art emerged. The bust of Akhenaten, like the one of the famous Nefertiti, is the only formerly entirely painted and partially gold plated object from the workshop of the sculptor Thutmosis. Currently, more information about the bust is being collected from an exact replica of it with the help of a CT-scan. This is a joint venture of the Imaging-Science-Institute (Siemens) at the Charité and the Technische Universität Berlin to present this unique but maltreated picture of the famous Pharaoh and his passion to the public.

Also soon shining in new splendour will be an unbelievable find of blue- und polychrome painted ceramic from the royal seat of Pharaoh Akhenaten and his wife Queen Nefertiti in Tell el-Amarna from excavations by the German Oriental Society in the years 1911 to 1913 and owned by the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung. These with floral garlands and nature motives painted amphoras, bottles, mugs and storage containers mirror the wealth as well as the form and design diversity of the ancient art of pottery of this period from around 1340 BC. Apart from some completely preserved containers the majority of the ceramics from the villas and houses lay presorted but unrestored in storage rooms.

Tickets are available at all ticket offices of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin in Berlin. Guided tours for groups can also now be booked.

International partners and lending institutions are the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Louvre, Paris, the British Museum and the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London.

The exhibition is supported by the Kuratorium Museumsinsel (Museum Island Trustees), Sparkasse finance group and the Society for the Promotion of the Ägyptisches Museum Berlin.

The following media partner cooperated for the exhibition: RBB Culture radio, National Geographic Germany, RBB Television, WELT/Morgenpost group, Zitty.



GENERALDIREKTION
PRESSE – KOMMUNIKATION – SPONSORING

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG
ABTEILUNGSLEITERIN

kommunikation@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum

ANNE SCHÄFER-JUNKER
PRESSE

Telefon: +49 30 266-42 34 02
Telefax: +49 30 266-42 34 09

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/presse

www.imlichtvonamarna.de