

Major exhibition of Egyptian treasures travels to Canada

Two Canadian cities, Montreal and Vancouver, are two of the three North American destinations for an exhibition of treasures from the tomb of Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses II. It will be the first time the precious objects, ranging from the lid of the pharaoh's tomb to monumental statuary and priceless jewelry, will be seen in North America.

The exhibition, *Ramses II and His Time*, will be presented in Montreal from June 1 to September 29, 1985. It will then travel to one United States city prior to ending its North American tour at EXPO 86 in Vancouver from May 2 to October 13.



Queen with a menat, carved in limestone 75 centimetres high, is considered one of the statuary masterpieces of the Ramsessides era.

The city of Montreal is organizing the North American presentation of the exhibition in co-operation with the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. The objects, which have been insured by Lloyds of London for \$35 million, are from the collection at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

A lengthy and golden age

Ramses II and His Time reflects a century of Egyptian civilization centering on the reign of one of the country's most important pharaohs. Ramses II, also known as Ramses the Great, was the third king of the nineteenth dynasty of Egypt. His reign, from 1290 to 1224 BC, was the second longest in Egyptian history.

The age of Ramses II is considered a golden age in Egypt. In his extensive building programs he restored temples and undertook

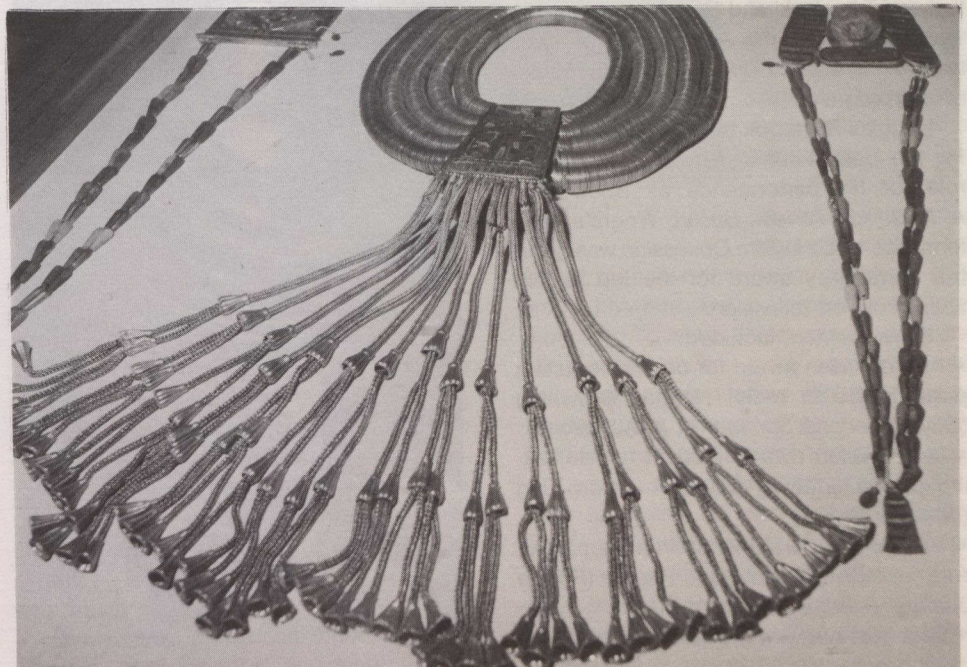
the construction of many famous monuments such as the rock temples at Abu Simbel, the Ramesseum at Thebes, the front courtyard of the temple at Luxor, the hypostyle hall at Karnak, as well as colossi and temples at Abydos, Tanis, Memphis and Heliopolis.

Donald Redford, a University of Toronto professor and one of Canada's leading Egyptian historians, said the information Ramses left behind is invaluable. "He was considered to be one of the greatest monarchs ever, even by the ancient Egyptians. His numerous letters and reliefs provide us with near-perfect road maps of the ancient world, descriptions of his battles and an intriguing insight into his personality," he said.

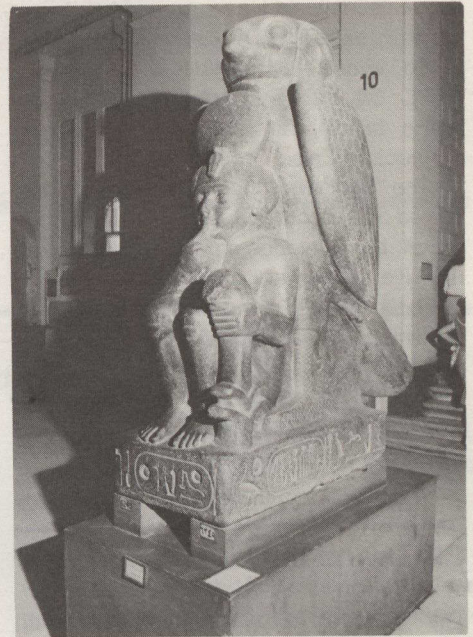
Reflection of an era

The exhibition consists of more than 80 precious objects that reflect the sub-themes of Son of the Sun God, family life, the builder king, science, letters and religion, the palace, the empire of the pharaoh, daily life and the craftsmen of the royal necropolis and the fate of Ramses II.

Among the items are: the lid of Ramses' tomb; solid gold, elaborately etched bracelets; a wooden chair with cat-like feet and embellished with gold; and a water clock, a bucket-like vessel which indicated the time as water drained out of it. The objects are made from many different materials and precious metals including gold, silver, granite, alabaster, sandstone, limestone, papyrus, terra cotta, frit, cornalian, shale, wood, bronze and bone.



Collar of Psusennes is made of gold and lapis lazuli.



Grey granite statue of Egyptian god Hauron with Ramses II is 2.31 metres high.

The exhibition will also include a full-scale photographic reconstruction of the tomb of Nefertari, the favourite queen of Ramses II. This tomb has been displayed separately in Europe and South America and will come to Canada under the auspices of the Canadian Mediterranean Institute.

Some 600 000 people are expected to visit the exhibition in Montreal where it will be presented at the Palais de la Civilisation, the former Expo 67 pavilion of France on Île Notre-Dame. The objects will be presented in a series of towering, pyramid-like modules.

The Montreal exhibition will also include film and slide projections, lectures, an Egypt