

# Exhibit makes only U.S. stop

"Cleopatra's Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies," the first international exhibition to examine the drama of this kingdom in transition, continues at the Detroit Institute of Arts through April.

The exhibition covers the little-known period, 305-30 B.C., which began with the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great and ended with the death of Cleopatra VII, the last of the Greek ruling dynasty begun by Alexander's general, Ptolemy.

The 140 masterpieces of stone statuary and relief, gold jewelry, silver vessels, figurines in terracotta and falience, painted papyrus as well as coins and objects in glass, bronze and wood, are from 40 public and private collections worldwide.

"This exhibition deals with one of the most significant and fascinating transitional periods in history," said William H. Peck, organizing curator of the exhibit and curator of ancient art at the museum.

"We see Macedonian Greeks ruling Egypt and respecting her ancient traditions even as they created a Mediterranean empire bridging the classical culture of Greece and the centuries-older culture of the Near East."

DESPITE the presence of the Ptolemies, who guided the fortunes of Egypt from their capital city of Alexandria on the Mediterranean, and the advent of the Roman legions in the first century B.C., Egyptian art retained its vitality and inventiveness.

After the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.), control of Egypt was seized by one of his generals, Ptolemy, a Macedonian Greek by birth, he defeated all rivals and de-

clared himself pharaoh in 305 B.C., inaugurating the dynasty that boasted 15 kings named Ptolemy and a number of powerful queens — Ariston, Berenike and Cleopatra — who ruled the land for nearly three centuries.

Cleopatra VII was the last of these generations. Intelligent, ambitious and politically astute, she was the only Ptolemy who learned the language of the people she governed. While she has captured the imagination of writers from Shakespeare to Shaw, her life actually was filled with drama.

THE YOUNG Cleopatra formed a successful alliance with Julius Caesar and his Roman legions when her claim to queenship was disputed. She allegedly bore Caesar a son. After Caesar's assassination, she married Marc Antony, with whom she hoped to make Egypt a world power and eventually rule the Roman Empire. Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide in 30 B.C., ending the Ptolemaic chapter in Egyptian history.

The exhibit was organized by the Brooklyn Museum, where it opened last fall. Detroit is the only place it will be seen before its final showing at the Kunsthaller de Hypo-Kulturtung, Munich, Germany.

Admission is by date/time ticket only, \$4 for adults; \$3 for seniors and students; and \$1 for children 6-12 years. Advance reservations are recommended, 833-0485. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday.

A RELATED exhibit is in the Albert and Peggy deSalle Gallery of Photography, "Slendors of the Nile" has approximately 100 century-old

photographs taken in Egypt by professional photographers and sold to travelers as souvenirs.

The determined photographers used weighty cameras and tripods. They worked with glass negatives that had to be evenly coated with a syrupy chemical mixture (wet collodion process), and developed prints in primitive darkrooms where tem-

peratures were 110-130 degrees.

They traveled miles up the Nile from Alexandria and Cairo to Giza, Memphis, Luxor, Edfu, Eana, Philae, Dender and Abu Simbel. They had to cope with marauders and wild dogs, and the hiring of camels, donkeys and boats to transport them and their equipment to remote sites. This exhibit is open free of charge.

## Programs complement show

Programs being held in conjunction with the exhibit "Cleopatra's Egypt" include: series of Hollywood films on Cleopatra and other historical figures beginning at 7 p.m. March 16; workshop analyzing the Cleopatras of Hollywood, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 29; family workshops 1-3:30 p.m. Saturday, March 11, and Saturday, April 8; stories and folk tales from Egypt by Susan Danoff for ages 7 to adult, 11

a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, April 1, and 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. April 2; and adult class, "Images of Power" with Brian Madigan, 10 a.m. to noon four Saturdays beginning Feb. 25.

There is a series of lectures relating to the exhibit at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 19, Tuesday, April 18, and Sunday, April 23.

For information, call the education department, 833-8804.

## In 'Sarcophagus'

Thad S. Avery is Bessmering and Robin L. Urban is Anna Petrova in "Sarcophagus," drama about the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, opening Friday and continuing through Sunday, March 5, at the Bonstelle Theatre at Wayne State University in Detroit. For ticket information, call the box office at 577-2960.

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