

ADVANCE PRESS RELEASE

24 July, 2018

## International exhibition on the Gods of Egypt from 12 October in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden

This autumn, from 12 October, the mystical world of the ancient Egyptian gods will come to life in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (National Museum of Antiquities) in Leiden, the Netherlands. The large exhibition 'Gods of Egypt' is entirely devoted to the ancient Egyptian pantheon and will bring together more than 500 imposing sculptures of gods and goddesses, magical papyri, gold jewels and richly painted mummy cases, from museums in the Netherlands and abroad, including the British Museum, the Louvre, the Museo Egizio of Turin, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna. 'Gods of Egypt' will run until 31 March. [www.rmo.nl](http://www.rmo.nl)

### Mystical world

The ancient Egyptians believed that everything - the creation of the cosmos, transient life on earth and eternal life after death – lay in the hands of gods and goddesses. These deities determined their entire view of the world and their everyday life. The pharaoh was considered one of the gods and represented the Egyptian gods on earth.

'Gods of Egypt' is an introduction to the ancient Egyptians' fascinating pantheon and their mystical world, steeped in symbolism. A life-size dual figure sculpture of Pharaoh Horemheb and the god Horus - one of the highlights of the exhibition - will welcome visitors at the entrance. Stories about Egypt's gods and the creation will be followed by a look at their home in the heavens and in temples on earth, where they were worshipped with countless rituals. The exhibition continues with the role of the gods in the eternal cycle of life and death, and descends to the underworld, the realm of Osiris, where every Egyptian hoped to reside after death. 'Gods of Egypt' concludes with the Greek and Romans who introduced Egypt's deities into their own world, and the influence of the Egyptian pantheon on art and popular culture in Europe.

For 'Gods of Egypt' the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden has assembled a wealth of world-class pieces from international museums and private collections. Objects from the British Museum (London), the Musée du Louvre (Paris), the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Vienna), the Roemer- und Pelizaeusmuseum (Hildesheim), the Allard Pierson Museum (Amsterdam), the August Kestner Museum (Hannover) and the Museo Egizio in Turin, home of one of the two greatest Egyptian collections in the world, will be displayed in over 800 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space. Students from the ArtEZ University of the Arts in Zwolle have been inspired by Egypt's deities and associated mythology to produce a series of short film animations, which will also be on view at the exhibition. 'Gods of Egypt' is the museum's fifth consecutive major winter exhibition, following on from 'Petra', 'Carthage', 'Queens of the Nile' and 'Nineveh'. It is also the farewell exhibition of curator Professor Maarten Raven, who is retiring after 40 years of service at the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.

The exhibition has been organised with funding from the Mondriaan Fund, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund, Djosier Reizen and Kidsweek. The Rijksmuseum van Oudheden is supported by the BankGiro Lottery.

### Extra

For the duration of the exhibition (12 October 2018 to 31 March 2019), the museum will also be open on Mondays, with the exception of 5 and 19 November. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue in Dutch (€19.95), free audio tours, in Dutch and English, lectures, a special range of goods in the museum shop and films screened at the Leiden International Film Festival. For children there will be a special audio-tour treasure hunt (in Dutch) with a 'Great Gods Quiz'. There will be special family tours (in Dutch) at weekends and children's activities in school holidays.

---

**Note for editors:** For more information and visual material, please contact the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, PR, Marketing and Communications Department, on 0031 (0)71-5 163 164 or via [communicatie@rmo.nl](mailto:communicatie@rmo.nl). Press photos are also available via [www.rmo.nl/pers](http://www.rmo.nl/pers)

'Gods of Egypt' will run from 12 October 2018 to 31 March 2019

The press reception is on **Wednesday 10 October 2018**. You will receive your invitation to this several weeks in advance.

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Rapenburg 28, Leiden, the Netherlands, [www.rmo.nl](http://www.rmo.nl), [facebook.com/Oudheden](https://www.facebook.com/Oudheden)