



## Frequently Asked Questions

### The Conservation and Management of the Tomb of Tutankhamen

A Project of the Getty Conservation Institute and Egypt's Ministry of Antiquities

#### **Where is the tomb located?**

The Tomb of Tutankhamen is in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank of the Nile River, across the river from the modern-day city of Luxor. The tomb was part of the necropolis of ancient Thebes during the New Kingdom (ca. 1548-1086 BCE) and is today a World Heritage Site.

#### **When was the tomb discovered?**

The tomb was discovered by Howard Carter in 1922, under the patronage of Lord Carnarvon.

#### **Where are the objects that were found inside the tomb?**

The majority of objects found in the tomb are currently housed at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, although there are plans to transfer objects to the Grand Egyptian Museum, currently under construction in Giza.

#### **What does the tomb currently contain?**

The tomb is approximately 40 feet below ground. Rock-cut steps lead down to four chambers. Only the burial chamber is painted. The tomb still houses a handful of original objects, including the mummy of Tutankhamen himself (on display in an oxygen-free case), the quartzite sarcophagus with its granite lid on the floor beside it, the gilded wooden outermost coffin in the sarcophagus, and the wall paintings of the burial chamber.

#### **Who collaborated on the project?**

The project was a multiyear collaboration between the Getty Conservation Institute and Egypt's Ministry of Antiquities.

#### **When did the GCI begin working on this project?**

The agreement to collaborate occurred in 2009, and work on the project began after that.

### **When was work completed?**

Work was completed in the fall of 2018.

### **What conservation was performed on the tomb's wall paintings during the project?**

The project included a thorough study of the tomb's condition, scientific study of the original materials of the wall paintings, and stabilization of the wall paintings. The paintings were stabilized through dust removal and reduction of inappropriate coating materials from previous treatments, and condition and environmental monitoring were also established to better evaluate future changes. DNA and chemical analysis were undertaken of the mysterious brown spots on the wall paintings. Testing confirmed the spots to be microbiological in origin but dead and thus no longer a threat.

### **What other work was undertaken by the project?**

The GCI also upgraded the protection and presentation of the site, including infrastructure (walkways, viewing platform, signage, lighting, and an air filtration and ventilation system to mitigate humidity, carbon dioxide, and dust), as well as a bilingual maintenance manual for the installations in the tomb, training for local personnel, and recommendations for visitor numbers and management that include guidelines for filming the tomb.

### **Is the tomb now open to the public?**

The tomb was closed for one month during the course of the project, and is currently open to visitors.

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