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MUMMIES: SECRETS OF THE PHARAOHS
REVEALED AT THE CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER IMAX THEATER
Giant screen film opens January 25, 2008

Los Angeles – *Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs* brings to life ancient wonders, historic intrigue and a modern-day forensic adventure, all in one extraordinary new film that opens January 25, 2008 at the California Science Center IMAX Theater.

During Egypt's history, literally millions of mummies were made. In *Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs*, filmgoers will marvel at the sight of these human time capsules, shown in larger-than-life detail on the giant screen.

Over the centuries, the mummies of Egypt's pharaohs have meant different things to different people. For the ancients, they were a source of hope for the afterlife; for the tomb-robbers, a source of wealth; for scholars, a source of knowledge; and for researchers, a source of genetic evidence that could advance medical science. For today's filmgoers, these mummies are a source of insight into a mysterious "other" world.

Narrated by actor Christopher Lee (*The Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars*, and the original 1959 film *The Mummy*), *Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs* reveals some of the mysteries surrounding the ancient royal mummies, how they were embalmed and where they were hidden, and also recreates the dramatic story of their recovery. Featuring top researchers such as Egyptologists Dr. Bob Brier and Dr. Zahi Hawass (head of Egypt's antiquities), and DNA scientist Angelique

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Corthals, the film also embarks on a genetic analysis of mummies that could have huge implications for the study of modern human diseases.

Mummies takes viewers on a journey back thousands of years, to the age of the great pharaohs and explores why mummification was so vital to ancient Egyptian life. Surprisingly, the techniques and ingredients used for mummifying have only been pieced together in the last 15 years, after a 2,000 year memory lapse. The film leaps ahead to the 1800s, when *Mummies* recreates the incredible events surrounding the discovery of a cache of 40 royal mummies, including 12 Kings of Egypt, in a single tomb. Among them were three of the greatest pharaohs that ever lived: the legendary Rameses the Great – considered to be the pharaoh of the Exodus and perhaps the only face the world can see from the Bible – his father, Seti I, and his son. Prior to that, not even one pharaoh had ever been found. Believed by many to be the ultimate archaeological find, it was uncovered a full four decades before Howard Carter discovered the intact tomb of the boy-king, Tutankhamen.

Interwoven throughout the film's historic narrative is a modern day forensic story, a scientific journey to extract clues about our past that could have an impact on our future. More than a decade ago, Dr. Brier and a colleague used the clues he had assembled to perform the first human mummification in the Egyptian style since the time of the pharaohs. In the film, he and a DNA specialist check in on the progress of that modern mummy and conduct key genetic testing. The forensic aspect of the film includes a scientific first – a discovery that could help researchers understand how ancient diseases have evolved into modern-day counterparts. Perhaps the DNA held in mummies like Rameses will be able to help cure people today.

Mummies was filmed by award-winning director Keith Melton (*Mystic India, Cirque de Soleil*) and renowned cinematographer Reed Smoot (*Mysteries of Egypt, Mystic India, Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure*), with a screenplay by Arabella Cecil (*Kilimanjaro: to the Roof of Africa*).

The film features breathtaking scenes of natural beauty and stunning locations combined with incredible CGI sequences, lavish sets and period recreations that immerse viewers in different eras of Egyptian history. IMAX cameras capture sweeping images of the swirling desert sand dunes and dramatic rocky cliffs of the Northern Sahara and the real wonders of Egypt at key historic sites with treasures honoring Egypt's most prolific pharaohs.

Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs is a production of Giant Screen Films and Gravity Pictures, in association with The Franklin Institute and the Museum of Science, Boston. Support for the film was provided by the U.S. Dome Theater Alliance. The film is distributed by Giant Screen Films of Evanston, Illinois.

Schedule as of January 25, 2008:

Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs – 11:30 am, 1:30, 3:30; additional show
Saturday/Sunday only at 5:30 pm

Sea Monsters 3D: A Prehistoric Adventure – 10:30 am, 12:30, 2:30 & 4:30 pm

About the California Science Center

The Science Center's mission is as follows: "*We aspire to stimulate curiosity and inspire science learning in everyone by creating fun, memorable experiences, because we value science as an indispensable tool for understanding our world, accessibility and inclusiveness, and enriching people's lives.*"

The **California Science Center** and **IMAX Theater** are located in historic Exposition Park just west of the Harbor (110) Freeway at 700 Exposition Park Drive, Los Angeles. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission to Science Center exhibits is free. For recorded information, including IMAX show times, call 323.SCIENCE (323.724-3623). IMAX ticket prices range from \$4.75 to \$8.00. For advance ticket purchases, group rates, or to make reservations for any visiting group of 15 or more (*required*), call 213.744-2019. Parking is available in the guest lot at Figueroa and 39th/Exposition Park Drive at \$6 per car, \$10 for buses or oversized vehicles. Both the Science Center and IMAX Theater are wheelchair accessible. For further information, please visit our website at www.californiasciencecenter.org.

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