

# ENTER THE PHARAOH

*Trip to ancient Egypt as close as Omaha*

BY DIANE BRODERICK  
Staff writer

Plenty of black eye makeup, potent alcohol and a heavy dose of unusual clothing.

They're the tools of the trade for this generation's Goth aficionados, but Searching for Ancient Egypt: Art, Architecture, and Artifacts from the University of Pennsylvania Museum shows that they were also everyday materials in ancient Egypt.

The traveling exhibit, now at Omaha's Joslyn Museum, makes ancient Egypt accessible and lends explanation to why Egyptians practiced religion the way they did.

It's also one of the more prominent exhibits to find its way to the museum, Joslyn director John Schloder said.

"This is undoubtedly one of the biggest exhibits the Joslyn has ever put on," Schloder said.

The exhibit extends a glimpse into the lives and daily practices of the ancient people for more than 3,000 years — and not just the ruling class.

The exhibit, which has artifacts excavated from palaces, pyramid sites, temples and cemeteries between 1890 and 1992 — takes a look at commonplace people of ancient Egypt, as well as their more powerful counterparts.

The people of the Nile would "sometimes drink to excess," says a placard accompanying a large wine jar with a lid, from 1353-1190 B.C., decorated simply and elegantly with light blue lotus leaves. Egyptians were accustomed to drinking both red and white wines, and the artifact is just one of several items that brings the practices of the ancient Egyptians to life.

As often seen in reproductions of tomb walls and hieroglyphics, Egyptians often wore makeup. Their reasons were plentiful, including health, vanity and because it was pleasing to their gods.

Their elaborate eye makeup, much like football players' today, was fashioned to cut down on the glare of the bright sun caused.

These facts and more are explained and illustrated in ancient artifacts the

Egyptian people had, including cosmetics dishes and other artifacts. The common people of Egypt serve as one quarter of Searching for Ancient Egypt, titled People of the Nile.

The exhibit is dissected into three other sections: Rulers of the Realm, Gods and Goddesses and Visions of the Afterlife.

Carved stone images of pharaohs, small statues and large photos of what pharaohs' throne rooms would have originally looked like pay tribute to the Egyptian royalty in the Rulers of the Realm portion.

A block statue titled "The Overseer of Priests" opens the section with the magnificent image of a religious official who looks as if he is sitting with his hands on top of his knees, tightly pulled to his chest.

Hieroglyphics, including prayers to Osiris, the god of the underworld, cover the legs of the statue. And large black eyes, open wide, seem to implore those who look upon it to take the hieroglyphics' meanings seriously.

A small statue of the child King Tutankhamen, who ruled from age 9 to 18, rounds out this portion of the exhibit. The statue serves as a reminder to an exhibit that came to the Joslyn in 1962: Tutankhamen Treasures.

King Tut's tomb, discovered in 1922, is considered the best-preserved tomb ever found, and it has made his reign more important than it was at the time, as his reign was hardly noted before his tomb was uncovered.

"There's also a statue of one of the Egyptian gods that has King Tut's features," Schloder said. "King Tut commissioned it."

The Gods and Goddesses portion consists mainly of statues large and small of Egyptian gods and goddesses, including the impressive "Serpent Goddess," 664-610 B.C., which has a woman's head and the body of a snake.

The remaining section of the exhibit, Visions of Life After Death, contains what Schloder calls the show's most important piece — a 4,300-year-old wall.

"It's the real center to the entire exhibit," Schloder said.

The wall, which takes up an entire room of the exhibit and was specifi-



COURTESY PHOTO

**RUNNING THROUGH JULY**, the exhibition Searching for Ancient Egypt displays 138 Egyptian artifacts that explore the religion, rituals and lifestyle of the ancient civilization.

ly restored for this show, is covered with hieroglyphics and also has images of the tomb owner, an Egyptian nobleman.

"(The wall) has a false door," Schloder said. "The Egyptians believed that behind this door the spirit would reside."

Offerings of food were often left

there, and the wall itself is decorated with various food so if there were no real offerings, according to the explanation, the wall paintings would come to life to nourish the dead nobleman's spirit.

Mummy cases and canopic jars, where organs were stored after they had been removed from the body, also

enhance this section of the exhibit, which features many notes on mummification, the Egyptian cemetery and Egyptian funerals.

The organization of the exhibit is aided by an audio tour, included in the admission price. The tour gives viewers

Please see **EGYPT** on 13

## Tango Buenos Aires plays up its seductive billing

■ Tango performance brings the spice of the South American dance and music to the Lied Center.

BY LIZA HOLTMEIER  
Senior staff writer

Sultry, thy name is tango. And Tango Buenos Aires serves as the playground for your seductive games.

During a two-hour performance Friday night, audiences revealed in the company's captivating presentation of tango music and dance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

And though the ensemble numbers sometimes

lacked synchronization, the dancers' impassioned duets emblazoned the crowd with the ardor of the tango.

The show began with the orchestra's presentation of the song "La Cumparsita." Behind the musicians, a pool of light cast the silhouettes of two dancers onto a screen of fabric. Their angular shadows and dramatic poses set the stage for the stream of passionate images to follow.

In "Organito De La Tarde," the male dancers glided on stage with a seductive smile and gait. In a tango of virility and strength, the men circled like street fighters, emphasizing the masculine power and grace of the dance.

Then, the women entered, contrasting the coercive force of the men. As they seductively dragged their cafe-style chairs behind them, their legs scissored and plunged into fervent lunges.

In a tango called "Orillera," one couple showcased the frenzied passion of the dance. With lightning speed, they entwined and unwound their legs, twirling and twisting around the stage until their final climactic pose.

The company ended the section before intermission in a dramatic number called "Quejas De Bandoneón."

After intermission, the dancers gave their most seductive performance in "Verano Porteño." In this number, two blue-clad women danced sensuously with their partners in squares of light. This dance showed the intimacy and individuality of the tango.

Various numbers after intermission played up the tango's sly humor. Several couples joked around with the dance's inherent flirtation, slapping each other on the rear and coyly winking.

However, the show ended on a rather anticli-

mactic note: After a piece celebrating the song and culture of Buenos Aires, the dancers forwent a dramatic dance ending and merely approached the edge of the stage, presented themselves to the audience and bowed.

Fortunately, a standing ovation led to a short encore with a more suitable, more dramatic conclusion.

The show's overall sophisticated style was enhanced by the dancers' elegant costumes. Dramatic slits, form-fitting dresses and strappy high-heeled shoes emphasized the women's enticing grace. The men, on the other hand, appeared boldly elegant in their 1940s-style suits and jauntily worn hats.

And by the end of the show, you wanted to not only dance like the performers but dress like them, too.