

EXPO



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POMPEII

the immortal city

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Pictures can be downloaded on our website www.expo-pompeii.be (Press)

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I. THE EXHIBITION IN BRIEF

The Museum of Europe, a nonprofit organisation, in collaboration with Tempora and its Italian partner Civita, has organised an exceptional exhibition in Brussels on the history of Pompeii entitled: 'Pompeii, the Immortal City'.

The *Museo Galileo* Firenze and the *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli* have produced the scientific scenarios within the exhibition layout. This exhibition plunges the visitor into the heart of the drama and the ruins of the ancient city. Spectacular immersive moments allow the visitor to experience the destruction of the city and to identify with the inhabitants of that time, immobilised by the volcano's ashes.

All the latest techniques of modern-day museology have been exploited in order to bring to life this ancient city, destroyed in 79 A.D.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EXHIBITION

- Moving immersive sequences: the destruction of the city; the discovery of the inhabitants immobilised in the ashes
- Over 100 authentic items found during the archaeological excavations
- Reconstitutions of spectacular machines
- The visitor follows one family's story throughout the itinerary
- 3D representations of the city as it was at the moment of destruction
- Interactive learning allows children to discover the excavation's surprises

2. WHY THIS EXHIBITION?



Pompeii and The Museum of Europe

The Romans were a major part of the original program of the Museum of Europe when it was founded some twenty years ago. At that time, we had sketched the outline of a 'series' of a history of Europe understood as a contiguous area of civilization. And, of course, in this series of three-dimensional narratives, the ancient foundations of this civilization and their 'legacy' were to be the object of the first temporary exhibition.

How could it have been otherwise? Wasn't the Roman Empire the first configuration of Europe? "Wherever the Roman Empire was dominant", wrote Paul Valéry in a famous text "wherever its power was felt, and even wherever, the empire was the object of fear, admiration and envy; wherever the weight of the Roman sword was felt, wherever the majesty of its institutions and laws, where the apparatus and dignity of the judiciary have been recognized, copied and even sometimes oddly mimicked, there we find something European."

Circumstances decided otherwise, and our 'series' has remained (for the moment) on the drawing board. Other themes imposed themselves on us, and, instead of the intended linear approach, our European narrative became kaleidoscopic.

But when the opportunity arose to launch this exhibition on Pompeii in Brussels, in a world premiere, there was no question of missing it. Not only because the Vesuvian city never ceases to exert a forceful power of attraction on the minds and senses. But also because this city buried under the ashes, whose dreadful misfortune has enthralled generations of scholars, adventurers and simply curious people, is a formidable repository of Romanism. It is Roman and, therefore, European.

Pompeii and Tempora

Belgian leader in the sector, Tempora specializes in the design and production of civilization and history exhibitions. Exhibitions that popularize the great issues of society while being able to attract tens of thousands of visitors. They effectively combine immersive moments, prestigious objects, artistic inspiration and scientific rigor.

An exhibition of civilization and history deconstructs the spheres of cultural activity, and thus the viewpoint of their 'consumers'. It sheds light on contemporary political questions through history, science and art. It integrates a diversity of expertise, provided by various disciplines, which it melts into a harmonious whole.


Pompeii and Civita

Founded in 1987, Civita Group is nowadays the Italian leading company in the enhancement of the cultural heritage, both in the fields of museum management and organization of cultural events. Since 2014, Civita is a member of IEN - Italian Entertainment Network.

Civita Group is currently managing more than 90 museums and archaeological sites, such as Uffizi in Florence, Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice, Galleria Borghese and Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome and the site of Pompeii, with an audience of 12 million visitors per year and more than 50 exhibitions per year in the most important museums in Italy and abroad.

Civita Mostre is the most recent organisation, exclusively dedicated to the production, organization and promotion of cultural events, both in Italy and abroad, with the aim to contribute to the cultural heritage valorisation and promotion. Combining professional skills and relationships with the most important international curators, designers, artists, museums and potential lenders, Civita Mostre can produce high profile tailor-made exhibitions for museums and cultural institutions worldwide about figurative arts, archaeology, science, history of civilization, design, photography, theatre, contemporary art and new media.

Civita and Tempora - the two companies had already joined forces to present the Steve McCurry exhibition to the public at the same location - shares that desire to popularize this type of exhibition. To demonstrate what this Roman civilization was, as the foundation of Europe, was therefore a natural joint venture. '*Pompeii, the immortal city*' was conceived from the outset to be exhibited in multiple locations, and is destined to become a reference in its field.

An immersive projection installation in a circular room. A large, dark, cylindrical structure in the center is covered in a dense, sparkling projection of light points, resembling a starry sky or a dense field of data. The room's walls are also covered in a similar projection, creating a continuous, immersive environment. In the background, several rectangular frames display images of people, possibly historical figures, in a dimly lit setting. The floor is dark and reflective, mirroring the light from the projections. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and futuristic.

Immersive projection:
'They are here with us'
© Tempora

3. THE MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE DI NAPOLI (MANN)



Bacchus and Ariane, fresco,
1st century BC
©Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli

The Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (MANN) is proud to participate with the loan of outstanding artworks in the “Pompeii, the Immortal City” exhibition, organized by Civita and Tempora, and to strengthen ties to the city of Brussels, where it is hosted in the prestigious venue of the Bourse, in the heart of the city. The drive towards a European policy of exchange and partnership has its roots in the historic age of excavations and discoveries of the Vesuvian cities backed by King Charles in the first half of the 18th century, a period that brought archaeological debate and classical culture back into the limelight in Naples. The museum’s commitment to participating, thanks to its vast collection of material from Pompeii, in prominent exhibitions throughout the world is driven by the hope that these events will reach and involve the general public as well as enhance scientific partnerships and relationships between different institutions and joint projects with the exhibition hosts.

A project of virtuous exchange which we refer to as “MANN in the world”, a program intended to reaffirm perhaps the most effective way of establishing a dialogue between the world’s peoples and enhancing cultural knowledge. In this case, it is also an effective means of strengthening a European identity with distant roots.

Paolo Giulierini

Director of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli

Valeria Sampaolo

Chief Curator of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli



Bracelet, gold,
1st century BC
© Museo Archeologico
Nazionale di Napoli

4. THE GALILEO MUSEUM IN FLORENCE

A commitment to present to the general public the fundamental aspects of the technical and scientific knowledge of Antiquity - which is the purpose of this exhibition - means confronting enormous problems due to the scarcity of source materials in this field. These problems have often been considered insurmountable, to the extent that very few temporary exhibitions and permanent installations relating to the technical and scientific culture of classical Antiquity have been established.

Despite these difficulties of comprehension and visualization, we have reserved a privileged space in this exhibition for perfectly functional models and technical installations, and the use of multimedia technologies in order to best express the informative potential contained in the magnificent original exhibits - often fragmentary and inevitably out of context.

The models designed and produced for this exhibition incorporate significant innovations, in particular with regard to the rigorous attention paid not only to the reconstruction and observance of assembly techniques and historically plausible materials, but also to the demonstration of their operation.

The long-standing collaboration with the Opera Laboratori Fiorentini, which was entrusted with the realization of the models, has resulted in the production of exhibits that generate a strong emotional impact, whilst respecting historical knowledge and having great didactic potential.

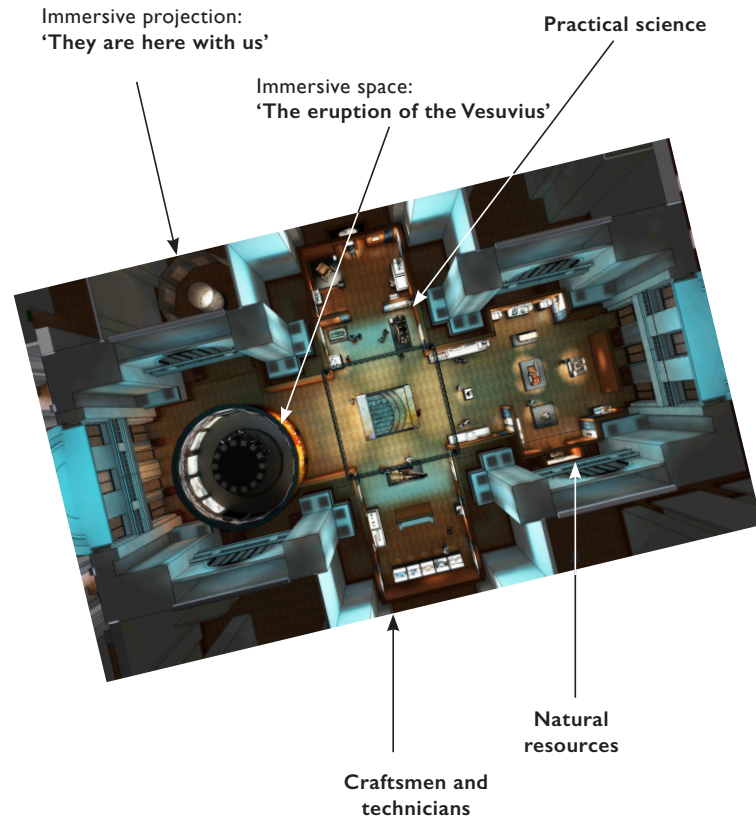
It is also important to mention the commitment of the Curator and the professionals of the Multimedia Laboratory of the Galileo Museum in the preparation of evocative multimedia presentations. Here too, the objective is to ensure maximum rigor and extreme respect for the original documents.

I sincerely hope that the collaboration we have had the privilege of sharing with the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, Tempora and Civita will become a broader and more ambitious partnership project, in order to offer the general public new and enriching interpretive keys, and to demonstrate that Antiquity did not fail in its attempts to develop high-level scientific and technical knowledge.

Paolo Galluzzi

Director of the Galileo Museum, Florence

5. THE EXHIBITION ITINERARY



The volcanic eruption which destroyed the Roman city of Pompeii in the year 79 A.D. was a catastrophe for its inhabitants, but a great opportunity for us. It actually makes it possible for us to explore the daily life of these men and women, as if they still lived alongside us, nearly 2000 years later.

The eruption petrified their lives, but also their living environment, which you will discover in the exhibition: the fauna and flora in and around the city, agricultural production, building techniques, mastery of water resources, measurements of time and distances, etc.

What this exhibition reveals is a city at work, with everyone playing an active role: artisans, farmers, architects, doctors, surveyors, masons, metal-workers, livestock breeders. A bustling, vibrant city on the move.... A far cry from the idea of a dormant city.

Prologue

The visitors begin their visit by getting to meet the characters who will accompany them throughout their itinerary: Caius junior and his close relatives are excited about preparations for a forthcoming banquet and are busy rebuilding the thermal baths, destroyed in an earthquake 17 years earlier...

It's also an opportunity to remember what Rome was like in the first century A.D.

The eruption

An immersive installation going back in time plunges the visitor into the heart of the catastrophe.

Following this, the visitor will discover today's city of Pompeii. A city as it was almost 2000 years ago.

Via exceptional items found during archaeological excavations, reconstitutions of impressive machinery and 3D projections of what the city was like before its destruction, the visitor will discover the region's nature as well as the ingenuity of a people in the process of rebuilding their city.

Natural resources

Grapes, olives and wheat were cultivated in the region around Pompeii. Several species of land animal and marine life were bred or farmed there. But using what techniques and which methods? That is what the visitor will be invited to discover in this section of the exhibition which focuses on the environmental context around the city.

A question: why did the people of Pompeii breed dormice?

An object: a loaf of bread, ready to be eaten, that has reached us intact from so long ago.

Craftsmen and technicians

In their workshops, many craftsmen shaped the face of the city that we admire today. The architects and engineers, who were most often slaves, played a key role here.

Visitors will discover both metal-workers and stonemasons, as well as the revolution in glass, heating systems and methods used for the construction of buildings, from the most humble to the most imposing.

A question: Did the Romans have any glass windows?

An object: a calcatoria, the largest crane used at that time.

Practical science

Great builders, the Romans used precise instruments and accurate measuring systems. In particular, their scientific know-how helped them devise machines, instruments and a variety of mechanisms. We can only admire the ingenious way in which they distributed water to every part of the city. But the inhabitants were not only engineers. The visitor will no doubt be astonished by their medical progress: cataract operations, the healing of fractures and dental care... very similar to our own!

A question: from which substance were the water pipes made?

An object: the ancestor of the odometer.

The story of Pliny

It is an unusual sight which the visitor is then invited to see: the alleged remains of Pliny the Elder. Writer, naturalist and military man, he was near Pompeii when the eruption took place. Curious and altruistic, he committed the fleet of which he was commander to sail closer and observe this natural phenomenon as well as to rescue those who were fleeing in distress. It would be his final act. An unexpected, poignant encounter.

Meeting the inhabitants

Another immersive moment, no doubt the most emotional of all: a dialogue, beyond the years, with inhabitants of the city. The bodies immobilized in the ash are transformed, come back to life and become the inhabitants of former days, then of today: Pompeii is alive and well!



Spectacular
reconstructions of machines
© Tempora

6. THE AUDIO GUIDE

A **free** audio guide accompanies the visitor throughout the itinerary. It is not there to explain to visitors what they can see and understand for themselves as they read the texts, but to provide a backdrop for the visit. In this way the visitor will be able to truly experience the story of one family, so badly affected by the catastrophe:

Caius is 17 years old; he was born in Pompeii in 62 A.D. just before the earthquake that destroyed part of the city and which killed his mother. He was brought up by his aunt, Rectina.

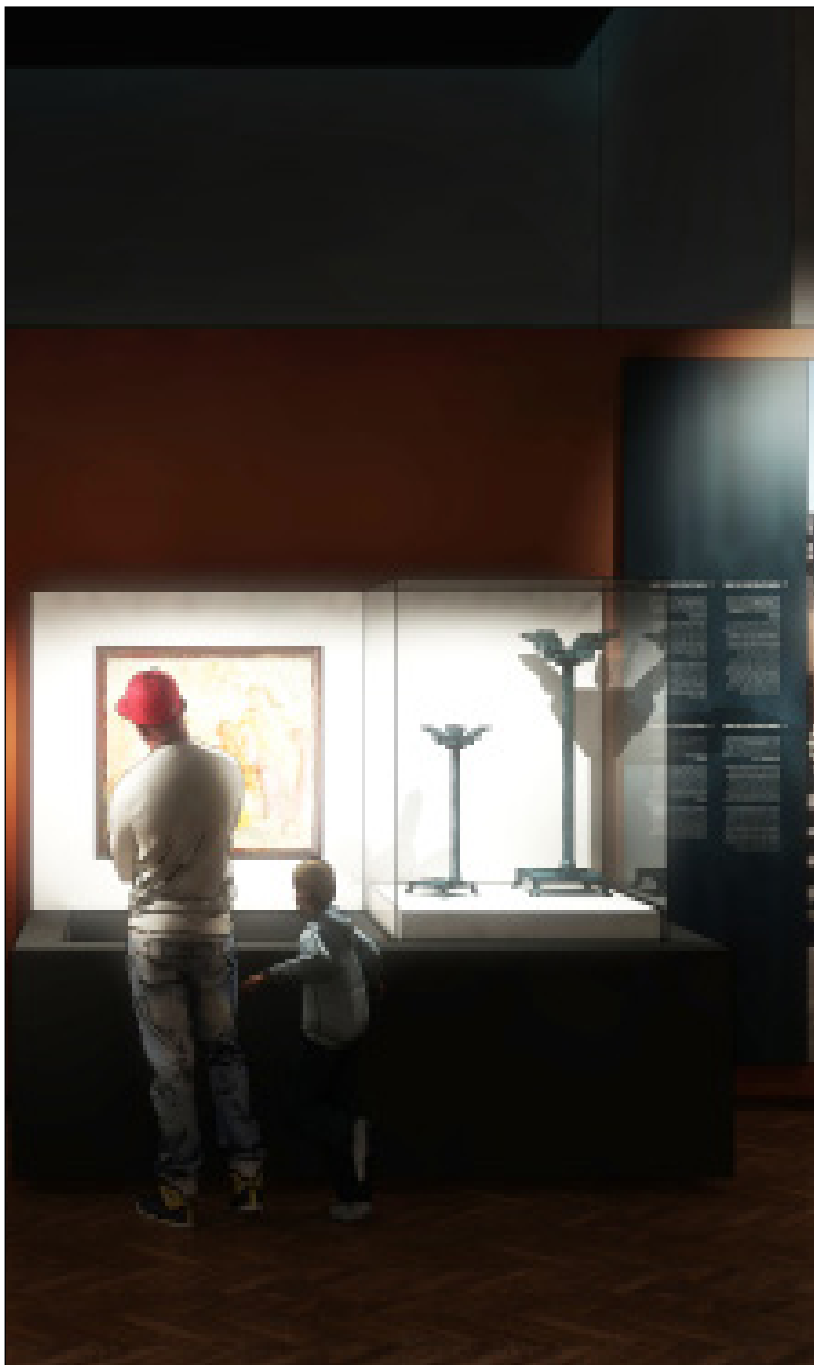
Rectina manages olive groves alongside her husband Lucius.

Lucius is one of the main wine and olive oil merchants in the whole region. He is helping his brother Caius senior to be reappointed as Duumvir.

Caius Cuspius Pensa senior was a Duumvir, one of the two most senior magistrates in Pompeii and wants to be reappointed at the next elections. To achieve this, he is financing gladiator fights, banquets and the restoration of damaged buildings.

Diphilus is a slave and architect in the household of the great Caius Cuspius Pensa. His master has asked him to build new thermal baths in the city center.

The story flows from the pen of Vianney Fontaine, and the historical features were checked by professor Alain Bouet, professor of Roman archaeology at the University of Bordeaux³. The historical accuracy makes this story particularly poignant.



7. THE CHILDREN'S ITINERARY



The youngest visitors have not been forgotten: there are different games for them at various intervals throughout the visit. Equipped with an archaeologist's tool... a virtual one, they will discover objects that have been buried for centuries. The goal here isn't primarily to explain to them what the objects are (even if that happens of course) but to help them to understand the way in which archaeologists carry out their work.



Immersive projection:
'the eruption of Vesuvius'
© Tempora

8. THE CATALOGUE



As one would expect, this catalogue follows the itinerary of the exhibition being presented for the first time at the 'Bourse' in Brussels from November 24, 2017, before it is exhibited in other major cities across the world. The reader-visitor will therefore find texts here that they would perhaps not have had time to read during the exhibition, including the story of Caius Cuspius Pensa and his family which punctuates the visit, and some of the most prestigious objects that were for the public's enjoyment.

But this catalogue is also a document about Pompeii. Thanks to the collaboration of scientists from the Galileo Museum in Florence and the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, its pages reveal the unfolding of the catastrophe, the story behind the rediscovery of the city, the fauna and flora around Pompeii and, in particular, the panorama of scientific knowledge and techniques mastered by the inhabitants of this Roman city. Not forgetting the incredible story of the presumed remains of the naturalist Pliny the Elder who died during the catastrophe as he sought to observe the phenomenon and attempted to help those inhabitants fleeing the danger. Pliny was the author of a magnificent *Natural History* in 37 volumes, a compilation of the scientific and technical prowess of his time and of which, when all is said and done, this exhibition is only a modest illustration!

9. THE EDUCATIONAL WORKBOOK



As with every exhibition, Tempora has produced an educational workbook aimed at pupils who are at the end of primary or in early secondary school. A workbook that is available on Internet. Aimed to draw pupils' attention to certain aspects of their visit, this time it contains a brand-new section: **exercises in Latin** that can be done based on graffiti found in the ruins of Pompeii.

Little quizzes thought up by Professor Dominique Longrée of the ULiège university.



10. LOAN INSTITUTIONS



MUSEO NAZIONALE ARCHEOLOGICO NAPOLI

MUSEO DELLA CIVILTÀ ROMANA, Rome

MUSEO STORICO NAZIONALE DELL'ARTE SANITARIA, Rome

PARCO ARCHEOLOGICO DI POMPEI

OPERA LABORATORI FIORENTINI, Florence

II. STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROJECT



An exhibition presented by:
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CIVITA MOSTRE
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In partnership with
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An exhibition designed and produced by
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In partnership with
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12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Creating and producing an exhibition calls for input from hundreds of people, from all backgrounds and crafts. The designers have ideas that the craftsmen bring to life and that the managers make possible. But often, ideas spring up on site and the directors abandon their computers and grab their paintbrushes and tools.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone for their enthusiastic cooperation.

Benoît Remiche & Alberto Rossetti

The partners would like to thank the institutions underneath for the loan of oeuvres, artefacts, models and documents:

Oeuvres & artefacts

MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE DI NAPOLI
MUSEO DELLA CIVILTÀ ROMANA, Roma
MUSEO NAZIONALE DELL'ACCADEMIA DI STORIA DELL'ARTE SANITARIA,
PARCO ARCHEOLOGICO DI POMPEI

Models

OPERA LABORATORI FIORENTINI CIVITA GROUP – LABORATORIO SCENOTECNICO, Firenze
(Laura Siattesi, Tommaso Cannavale, Emanuele Zipoli, Ivan Cristian, Veronica Leprai, Massimiliano Di Cocco, Simona Gulino, Elvira Petraccone, Roberto Castiglione)

Scientific videos

MUSEO GALILEO-LABORATORIO MULTIMEDIALE, Firenze

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