

*Out of the Vaults: Book of the Dead*

Royal Ontario Museum

*[Animated "Out of the Vaults" logo, followed by animated ROM logo accompanied by traditional Egyptian music]*

*[Cut to view of rocky desert landscape; sound of blowing wind]*

**Roberta Shaw:** Hello, I'm Roberta Shaw from the Royal Ontario Museum. Welcome to Egypt.

*[Cut to panning view of pyramid in a barren desert landscape]*

*[Cut to show Roberta Shaw, Assistant Curator of Egyptian Arts & Culture standing in the desert with a pyramid visible in the distance]* **Roberta:** We're here to tell you the story of the ROM's newly restored Book of the Dead.

*[Cut view of densely packed, tall buildings in a modern Egyptian city; Egyptian music is audible]*

*[Cut to view of sun setting behind the minarets of a mosque]*

*[Cut to view of a woman in red walking towards the camera in a crowded street]*

*[Cut to view of a man carrying a number of boxes on his shoulder down a narrow street]*

*[Cut to zooming view of a modern city as seen across the Nile; a rowboat full of people is visible in the foreground]*

*[Cut to close-up of three smiling children in the street as they wave at the camera]*

*[Cut to close-up of the surface of the water with the city in the distant background]*

*[Cut to view of a series of docks along the waterfront; a man standing in a small boat in the foreground strikes the water with his oar]*

*[Cut to low-angle view of a man in a long, dark robe sitting at the foot of a large, white camel]* **Roberta:** I'm in Luxor, in southern Egypt *[cut to view of a large cluster of small,*

*sand-coloured structures at the base of a sandy ridge in the desert], once known as ancient Thebes [cut to panning view of an archival photograph of C.T. Currelly seated in front of a tent] and the ROM's Book of the Dead was purchased by the founder of the ROM, C.T. Currelly when he worked here in Egypt a hundred years ago.*

*[Cut to zooming view of a series of openings in a rocky face in the desert] Presently, I'm standing on this vast graveyard, which contains elaborate tombs and simple graves [cut to view of Roberta standing in front of the entrance to a tomb] that date as far back as thirty-five hundred years ago.*

*[Cut to view of the ROM's Book of the Dead; zooms in to show hand-written script] The ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead [cut to panning view of the ROM's Book of the Dead unrolled on long white table in a ROM lab] is essentially a series of chapters written on papyrus, [cut to detail of a figure in a boat with a pile of coloured fish, painted on the scroll] little aids giving knowledge to achieve paradise in the next life. [Cut to medium overview to an illustrated portion of the scroll] They're the original illuminated manuscripts.*

*[Cut to view of a conservator pushing a long cart with part of the scroll through a ROM conservation lab]*

*[Cut to view of a conservator placing a cover on the scroll, which is arranged flat on a long table in a conservation lab]*

*[Cut to panning shot of the scroll, which is arranged along the edge of a table and covered in glass] We've discovered this in our storage and it's going to be six metres—it's the length of these two tables.*

*[Cut to view of Roberta standing behind a table with a framed portion of the scroll arranged in front of her in a collection area at the ROM] **Roberta:** This particular piece, which is less than a metre, came into the museum with Currelly. [Cut to medium close-up of Roberta's face] We thought this was the only piece we had of this particular papyrus.*

*[Cut to view of four women working in a ROM conservation lab] We have now got three people from Bonn here, [cut to view of the language specialist working at a table with bits of scroll and sheets of paper arranged in front of her] we've got the language expert, [cut to close-up of the woman's hands as she opens a box filled with small fragments of the scroll] who knows how to read this stuff, and of course, put it together [cut to close-up of a conservator's hands arranging tiny pieces of scroll], because it is a jigsaw puzzle. And we have two women who are actually expert in actually conserving the papyrus itself [cut to close-up of conservator rubbing the edges of the scroll onto a white surface]*

*[Cut to view of the Nile with the sun setting in the background; Egyptian music is audible]*

*[Cut to view of a crowded marketplace]*

*[Cut to view of several square structures along a ridge in the desert; two figures in black walk towards the buildings]*

*[Cut to view of a series of tombs cut into the rock of the desert; camera zooms in on the square openings]* **Dr. Irmtraut Munro:** The Arab excavators, they saw a roll in the tomb *[cut to view of hieroglyphics carved on the wall of the tomb; camera zooms out and pans to show a dark corridor leading further into the tomb]* and they shouted, "kitab al ma'ut" *[cut to view of Dr. Munro in the conservation lab at the ROM]* That is translated from Arabic, "Book of the Dead." And this is text from this kind of Egyptian literature until today. *[Cut to panning view of hieroglyphics painted on a wall]* Old Egyptians, they called "Book of the Dead" *[cut to view of a pair of striped panels on the wall of a tomb; camera pans to show a row of painted figures]* the Book of Coming forth to Daylight." *[Cut to panning view of a large wall painting]* He wanted to have powerful spells *[cut to view of dark corridor leading into a tomb]* to guide him through the underworld.

*[Series of quickly cut still images showing various details from the ROM's Book of the Dead; cut to overview of a painted segment showing various figures; camera slowly pans]*

*[Cut to view of Roberta standing by the opening to a tomb in the desert]* **Roberta:** Recent research has shown *[camera zooms in on Roberta]* that the ROM's Book of the Dead dates back to twenty-three hundred years ago, *[cut to close-up of a sealed entrance to a tomb with "97" inscribed above the door; camera pans across the opening]* and that it was indeed from somewhere in this site. *[Cut to close-up of Roberta in front of the entrance to the tomb]* It was buried in one of these tombs *[cut to view of several tomb entrances cut into a desert ridge; camera zooms out quickly to show most of the ridge]* with a man by the name of Amenemhat.

**Dr. Munro:** I can say that *[cut to view of Dr. Munro in a ROM conservation lab]* this papyrus must come from Thebes. *[Cut to close-up of the papyrus; Dr. Munro points to a panel with eight anthropomorphic figures inscribed on the scroll]* We have here eight gods. These pieces exist only in Theban manuscripts. *[Egyptian music cuts in]*

*[Cut to view of a small cluster of houses in the desert]*

*[Cut to view of a crowded Egyptian street]*

*[Cut to panning shot of a stony ridge in the desert]* **Roberta:** Dr. Munro was able to sort of gingerly unroll a bit of it, *[cut to view of Roberta standing in a ROM collection area]* and she said, "Well it belongs to this." And she said, "There are six metres or so in this roll!"

*[Cut to close-up of an area of the scroll showing two figures painted in colour and accented with gold]* **Dr. Munro:** I have seen many manuscripts of this all over the world. *[Cut to view of Dr. Munro standing by the scroll in a ROM conservation lab]* This is one of the most delicate and wonderful... *[Cut to close-up of the scroll showing a row of painted figures; Dr. Munro uses a fine paintbrush handle to point at the gold leaf]* the fine brush of the painter and especially the gold leaf. There are not so many where gold leaf is used in abundance.

*[Cut to a view of a dark corridor leading to a tomb; camera pans back]*

*[Cut to panning view of painted hieroglyphics on a stone wall]*

*[Cut to a broken pillar at the entrance to a tomb in the desert]*

*[Cut to a view of the shoreline of the Nile at sunset]*

*[Cut to a view of the scroll arranged on a table for conservation; a conservator places a white cover over the papyrus]*

*[Cut to a close-up of the bottom of a cart as it is pushed through the conservation lab]* **Roberta:** It's certainly an exciting project, it's going to take us at least a month to take it apart, *[cut to a close-up of a detail of the scroll showing four anthropomorphic figures seated on a small boat]* and then put it together, *[cut to a detail of the scroll showing four standing anthropomorphic figures]* then conserve it. The rolled scroll has been in storage for a hundred years.

*[Cut to a view of Roberta in a ROM collections area]* We are literally bringing the Book of the Dead to life!

*[Egyptian music cuts in; screen fades to black, white text reads: © Copyright ROM, 2008]*