

Virtual Reality production tour based on ancient Egypt Being prepared

~ Toppan Printing and the Asahi Shimbun Company to begin the joint creation.

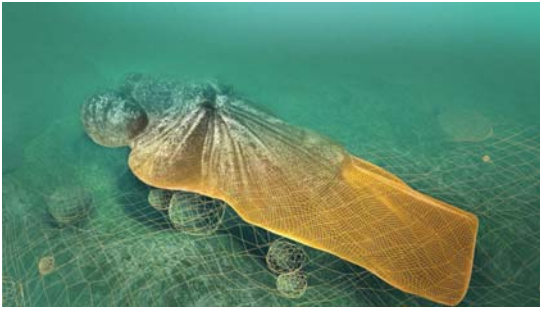
Production that will be displayed at the “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures: The ancient cities of Alexandria region come alive from the undersea for the world to see”

Recreating Egypt’s underwater ruins and ancient cities in VR

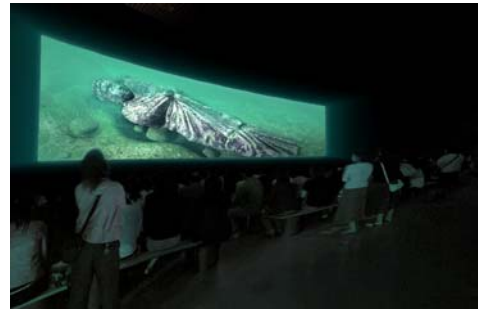
Toppan Printing and the Asahi Shimbun Company will jointly develop a VR (Virtual Reality) production entitled “Egypt of the Sea: The Ancient City of Alexandria”. This production will be screened within the exhibition “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures: The ancient cities of Alexandria region come alive from the undersea for the world to see” that will be held at Pacifico Yokohama (Nishi-ku, Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture) from June 27, 2009 to mark the 150 year anniversary of the opening of Yokohama port.

During Egypt’s last dynasty, the Ptolemaic Dynasty (305BCE to 30BCE), there were the prosperous ancient cities of Alexandria, Canopus and Heracleion. It is said that the valuable ruins that display their majesty sank to the seabed sometime around the 8th century due to natural occurrences. Currently, excavation and research is being conducted by experts including Franck Goddio, the French underwater archaeologist, and the appearance of the ancient cities is becoming clearer with the discovery of numerous statues and artifacts.

Taking the underwater ruins and the ancient cities as its theme, the production of this VR content is based on the latest findings by Franck Goddio, through excavations made possible by the Hilti Foundation, and also his past research materials. It will be shown at the exhibition “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures” VR theater, which will be installed at the venue and use the latest ultra-high definition digital projectors and a large screen. With Toppan Printing’s VR technology, the underwater ruins and ancient cities will be recreated with ultra-high definition images generated in real time by a computer. A navigator uses a controller to move around freely within the virtual space, and viewers are able to have a virtual experience of seemingly diving underwater or being in an ancient city. By listening to the navigator’s explanation of the events from the actual excavation and the historical background, people of all ages will be able to enjoy exploring the world of ancient Egypt.



VR reproduction of the excavation site based on data measured on the seabed and images from the excavation itself



Conceptual image of the exhibition "Egypt's Sunken Treasures" VR theater

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Features of the VR production

1) Underwater scenes that enable viewers to see the excavated seabed and its environment

Underwater representation for VR will be newly developed, statues will be recreated as they appeared when they were discovered, and ruins that cannot be brought to Japan will be recreated, as even now some other palaces and sunken ships still lie at the bottom of the sea in Egypt. Viewers will be able to experience something similar to actually diving into the sea and exploring the seabed.



Artifacts raised from the seabed digitized with

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2) Scenes of ancient cities reproduced based on past research materials and the latest findings of excavation

VR's features include being able to reproduce and visualize objects that no longer exist. Making use of this feature, the city of Alexandria as it was approximately 2000 years ago will be recreated. It will be possible to see the beautiful ancient city of Alexandria from a bird's-eye view, known as the city loved by Cleopatra.

The exhibition “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures” to mark the 150 year anniversary of opening of Yokohama port

The “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures: The ancient cities of Alexandria region come alive from the undersea for the world to see” is an international traveling exhibition that presents the treasures excavated from the underwater ruins of the 3 ancient cities on the Mediterranean Sea: Alexandria, Canopus and Heracleion. The exhibition will display for the first time in Japan around 490 artifacts including statues such as a 5 meter pharaoh, a sphinx, and a goddess; as well as accessories decorated with gold and gems, and coins featuring Cleopatra’s profile.

An exhibition organized by the Asahi Shimbun in cooperation with Franck Goddio, Hilti Arts and Culture GmbH. The expeditions in Egypt have been made possible by the Hilti Foundation.

Organizers:

The Asahi Shimbun, Tokyo Broadcasting System Television, Inc., Executive Committee for “Egypt’s Sunken Treasures” (The Asahi Shimbun, TBS, Hakuhodo, Hakuhodo DY Media Partners Inc., TOW Co., Ltd.)

Sponsored by : Hilti Japan

Special Support by: Hilti Foundation

Venue: Pacifico Yokohama (1-1-1 Minato Mirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture)

Schedule: Saturday June 27, 2009 to Wednesday September 23, 2009 (national holiday)

URL: www.asahi.com/egypt/

Toppan Printing’s efforts in VR production

Since 1997, Toppan has been engaged in the development of VR technology as a means to visually display cultural assets. It has been active in producing VR content based on valuable cultural assets from Japan and overseas. Productions include “Nasca” and the “Ashura National Treasure”. The company is also expanding the use of VR theaters with large screens, and has installed them in China’s Palace Museum and Honduras’s Museo Para La Identidad Nacional (Museum of National Identity). In collaboration with the Tokyo National Museum, the TNM & TOPPAN Museum Theater was opened in the Museum’s Research and Information Center in 2007.

URL : <http://www.toppan-vr.jp/bunka/>

VR (Virtual Reality)

Virtual Reality allows viewers to move freely within a computer-generated 3D graphic image and experience a sense of being in the 3D space itself. The main elements of the system are the high-definition 3D data (shape, texture, light, etc.) that creates the environment and the technology that generates the image from the data in real time in response to the navigator's operation. A large screen is used to display the high-resolution images that are created and viewers can experience a sense of immersion in the virtual space.

Toppan Printing; Head office: Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo; President & CEO: Naoki Adachi

Asahi Shimbun Company - Chuo Ward, Tokyo; President & CEO: Kotaro Akiyama

NOTE: This product is not available in the United States. For more information, please contact Ron Ens at 732-469-8400 ext. 2505.