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THE EXCAVATIONS AT TELL EL-AMARNA AN INTERVIEW WITH BARRY KEMP

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SSEA MEMBERS

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CANADA

From the eastern mountain to the western mountain, is Akhet-aten itself... It [the stelae marking the boundaries] shall not be washed out. It shall not be made to disappear. If it disappears, if it vanishes, if the stela on which it [these boundaries are written] falls down, I shall renew it again, afresh in this place in which it is. An excerpt from "Later Boundary Stelae of Akhenaten" (Lichtheim: 48-51).¹



The South Tombs Cemetery, December 2011 excavation season. The trench demonstrates that the cemetery extends part of the way across the floor of the wadi. Photo by B. Kemp.



Aerial view of part of the foundation surface of the Great Aten Temple. The rectangular marks are where stone offering-tables stood. November 2012. Photo by Sue Kelly and Miriam Bertram.

The site of Akhetaten, or el-Amarna as it is known today, was first visited by Westerners in the early 18th century, most notably the Napoleonic expedition who developed the first map of the area, subsequently published in the famous *Description de l'Égypte*. This investigation of the site would continue on in the early to late 19th century by scholars and explorers alike such as John Gardiner Wilkinson, Richard Lepsius and Alessandro Borsani who continued to map, record and clear specific areas of the site respectively.²

However, the first excavations (in a modern sense) to take place were conducted by Sir Flinders Petrie between 1891 and 1892 within the Central city; an area which encompasses the Great Aten Temple and the main palace. Further exploration of the site was continued by Norman de Garis Davies who recorded the private tombs at Amarna and excavations commenced once again in 1907 until the beginning of World War I in 1914. These excavations were conducted under the auspices of the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* by Ludwig Borchardt³ who continued the investigation of the Central city which were previously carried out by Petrie.

Excavations reconvened from 1926 until 1936 by the

Egypt Exploration Society under the primary direction of Henri Frankfort, who analyzed the areas which encompass the Workmen's Village and the North Suburb respectively and John Pendlebury whose excavations focused on the investigation of the Central city and Great Aten Temple⁴. Some 41 years later, excavations were revived by the Egypt Exploration Society, led by Sir Barry Kemp, who is known for his continued investigation of the site from the 1970s until the present.

The Amarna Project was established as of the year 2000, and is supported by The Amarna Trust and The Amarna Research Foundation.

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The author of this introduction is Hanna Kurnitzki-West.
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AN INTERVIEW WITH BARRY KEMP



Part of a scene in the Royal Tomb at Amarna, showing sunrise at the House of the Aten, the original name of the Great Aten Temple. Men lay food-offerings on the offering-tables. Photo by B. Kemp.

1. You have had many decades of looking at his capital city to form opinions about Akhenaten as a ruler. How has work at Amarna affected your opinion of him? For example, Do you think that Akhenaten neglected Egypt's hegemony in the Levant or do you see him as a savvy Machiavellian politician (playing vassals off of one another) as Schulman has suggested?

I began work at Amarna because of an interest in the nature of ancient cities and the kind of life that they sustained, and that has remained my main interest. I find Akhenaten an intriguing figure, but working at Amarna does not in itself lead to insights into his character or policies other than those that are illustrated by what is in the ground.

The side to Akhenaten that is most visible is the one that is illustrated by the archaeology of religion. The scale of the offering-cult to the Aten as finally planned was such as to imply that he saw it as a source of benefit to the population of the city. I say 'as finally planned' because the striking design of the Great Aten Temple in its final phase developed quite late in his reign and might not even have been finished by the time he died. A great deal more fieldwork is needed to determine the chronology of the city, including its central portion. It looks as though Amarna was started on the basis of a generalized sketchy plan or an idea that was left without being specified in detailed, and developed its final shape through delegated decision-making and, in the case of the cult layouts, a piecemeal process of change and enlargement.

The archaeology of religion at Amarna also illustrates the limits to which the ancient Egyptians were affected by the drive for consistency in thinking that is so prominent a feature of later monotheistic religions and often gives rise to intolerance. The well-known destruction of names and images of Amun that took place during Akhenaten's reign is a sign of awakening realisation that some expressions of belief were wrong. Another was the apparent banning of the cult of Osiris. Both were gods with a powerful role in the thinking that supported kingship in Egypt. But Akhenaten seems not to have then followed what we would see as the logical next steps, controlling the beliefs of the population as a whole. Only by accepting this limitation in his thinking can one explain the ubiquitous presence in the city of material that represents domestic cults, mainly of protector gods.

2.

Akhenaten and the Amarna Period thus emerge as a significant moment in the history of thought, as acquiescence in inconsistency reached its limits.

2. Back in the 1990s there were discoveries made that supported the existence of plague at Amarna, and this epidemic was brought forward as a reason for abandoning the site. Have you encountered any more evidence of plague at Amarna? Do you expect to do so now that the cemeteries are under investigation?

Question submitted by S.A., Toronto ON

That there was an epidemic of some kind (plague is a word that is better avoided) in the Levant that the Hittites saw as originating in Egypt and was affecting people at least in the latter part of the Amarna Period is known from non-Egyptian written sources. The study of the human remains excavated at the South Tombs Cemetery is still in progress and will take several years to complete. We now have bones from 400 individuals, so a sample of reasonable size to work with. So far, one of the characteristics of the population is an unusually high mortality rate amongst young people, those in their teens and early twenties. This pattern is consistent with exposure to serious epidemic disease. One cannot really be more positive than this. In the most recent seasons there are hints that this pattern might not be evenly spread in the cemetery, but this then leads on to attempting to subdivide the cemetery into phases, something that has not yet been attempted in detail.

Pre-modern societies were regularly affected by epidemic disease. It is something we should expect to have happened during any significant period of time that we study. There is no need to seek an explanation of this kind for the abandonment of Amarna, however. It was probably not a place very suited for an important city. It owed its origin to Akhenaten's wish to find a place for the cult of the Aten that was pure and uncontaminated by previous human presence. Had his successors maintained it as the centre of the Aten cult it could have had a long-term future. Without that, abandonment was probably inevitable (though one should not forget that the abandonment was not total; a small town towards the southern end of the site remained in existence through the rest of the New Kingdom, probably because it served the quarries at Hatnub).

3. How have recent archaeological discoveries at places like Saqqara affected your understanding of Amarna, both the site and the Period as a whole?

I have to admit: hardly at all. Saqqara could play a key role if a cemetery equivalent to those at Amarna was found, excavated and produced detailed studies of artefacts and human remains. So far, it has not. I realize that the question is pointing in the direction of the tombs of high officials and members of the royal family, but I leave it to others to integrate the historical findings with the stock of knowledge on the history of the period.

4. Is there anything (e.g. category of artefact, architectural feature, etc) which you particularly hope will be found at Amarna, something which will answer a burning question in your mind?

I remain strongly attracted to using archaeology as a major source for understanding the past. But I also recognize that written sources, even very short ones, can provide answers that will not come from anywhere else. A single short ostrakon, of the kind abundantly found in the past at Deir el-Medina, might, for example, clarify the purposes of the Workmen's Village and especially the Stone Village in a way that no amount of detailed archaeological research can. What might have been the responsibilities of the Mayor of Akhetaten (an office known from one of the tomb owners)? Only a written source will tell us. But I am a realist. A century of work at Amarna has uncovered so little written material that bears on the way the city functioned that one has to resign oneself to such material probably never coming to light.



Team of builders from El-Till laying limestone blocks along part of the Great Aten Temple. March 2013. Photo by B. Kemp.

5. What is an object or feature, from Amarna, that you feel has not gotten enough attention? Can you give us some brief aspects of the object/feature for our readers?

The broad strip of desert that separates the city from the cliffs was traversed by a complicated network of tracks that undoubtedly belong to the Amarna Period. They are gradually disappearing although what is left of them has been mapped by the expedition. They imply the existence of a system of control though one that was, like so much at Amarna, developed in an ad hoc fashion. Their existence is tied up with attempts to understand what lay behind the creation of the Workmen's Village and Stone Village, and also with trying to understand the pictures of policing shown in the tomb of Mahu at Amarna.

6. How has the Egyptian government leadership-change affected archaeology projects in Egypt? Has it affected your work in any way?

Foreign archaeology in Egypt is controlled by a governing committee of what is now the Ministry of Antiquities. Its official title in English translation is the Permanent Committee. It has continued to meet and consider foreign applications for work. Permits continue to be issued, contracts are signed and foreign expeditions are expected to abide by the wide-ranging regulations that have been in place for a long time. The ability to work at any one place is, however, also dependent upon the judgement of the local police. They have the responsibility for ensuring the safety of foreign missions, and will not take on this responsibility unless they consider that the risks are low. So far, they have not allowed work at Amarna on two occasions. One was in the months following the revolution of 2011, the other was a short time during this autumn. The elections and judicial trials that are likely

to take place early in 2014 might also cause some delay in opening the site.

7. What would you say is the main threat to Amarna today?

Archaeological sites the world over are threatened by rising populations and the economic development of the land. The fact that land is desert is now far less of an obstacle to claiming it for agriculture than it used to be. The main threat to Amarna is therefore more illegal encroachment. This is something taken very seriously by the local antiquities inspectorate and police, but also involves local politics and questions of precise land ownership



A section of the ancient road system adjacent to the Stone Village, viewed to the east. Photo by B. Kemp.

boundaries. Each side sees successes and failures.

8. In the several decades you have been excavating at Amarna, has there been a high point: a moment or discovery that stays with you?

The first day of work at the site is always a high point. The bringing together of sufficient funds, a set of permits and agreements and a good team of people always feels like an achievement accomplished in the face of many potential setbacks. Usually, the preceding day is also one of great satisfaction. A large committee of inspectors and representatives of the police come to the house for the formal signing of the documents that, for the duration of the season, hand over parts of Amarna and the contents of the magazines to our utilization. The magazine doors are unblocked, the seals on the doors inspected, the big iron doors are opened and we solemnly enter to ensure that everything has remained intact since the end of the previous season. After this, the work itself follows its course until the whole process is repeated in reverse.

This, I realize, is a manager's perspective but not the full story. I became drawn to field archaeology when I was at school and participated in local excavations in the British midlands. The recovery of fragmentary evidence from the ground and putting it together as an understandable narrative has never lost its fascination. Walls, floors, stratigraphic relationships: these are the things that excite me just as much as the myriad fragments of objects. So there is no one high point of discovery in the past, and so no sense of anti-climax to follow. It is all good.

9. You've been excavating at Amarna since the late 1970s. Do you see an end in sight?

The amount of ground that has been covered by fresh excavation under my direction is not so great. In 1987 we began a programme to reclear, study afresh and carry out repairs at some of the major buildings excavated by previous expeditions. This could go on forever, since the repairs we carry out need to be followed by periodic maintenance. We have done extensive work of this kind at the Small Aten Temple and the North Palace and are now tackling the Great Aten Temple. I see this work as having equal importance to excavating fresh parts of the site. Moreover, a fresh look at a known building always reveals more information.

10. How does someone get involved in the Amarna Project today?

Many of the people who come to work at Amarna are specialists who study particular categories of material, and this is of benefit both to them and to the expedition. The field teams who work, for example, at the cemetery or the temple, are generally quite small. Because some return for several seasons, vacancies are few. People interested in working as an archaeologist (or illustrator) should send their cv to me or to the assistant director, Dr. Anna Stevens. We are, naturally, looking for people who already have good archaeological experience and field skills.

ABOUT BARRY KEMP:

Sir Barry J. Kemp, CBE, is Director of the Amarna Project and Chairman of the Amarna Trust. He is also Emeritus Professor of Egyptology at the University of Cambridge, UK and a Senior Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. He has directed the excavation and archaeological survey at Amarna for the Egypt Exploration Society since 1977. He was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2011 New Year Honours for services to archaeology, education and international relations in Egypt.

Kemp is the author of numerous books and articles, many of which are essential works for the study of Egyptian social history, and of the Amarna Period. These include *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti: Amarna and Its People* (2012), *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (2nd Edition, 2005), *Amarna Reports*, parts 1-5, *Busy Lives at Amarna: Excavations in the Main City* (Grid 12 and the House of Ranefer, N49.18) (co-authored with Anna Stevens; 2011), *The Main Chapel at the Amarna Workmen's Village and Its Wall Paintings* (Excavation Memoirs) (co-authored with F.J. Weatherhead; 2007). In 2009, a Festschrift in his honour, *Beyond the Horizon: Studies in Egyptian Art, Archaeology and History in Honour of Barry J. Kemp*, edited by Salima Ikram and Aidan Dodson, was published by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF BARRY KEMP AND THE AMARNA PROJECT.

THE AMARNA TRUST (UK Registered charity number 1113058)

The Amarna Trust works to support archaeological research at Tell el-Amarna in Middle Egypt. It provides funding for ongoing survey and excavation, facilitates conservation of the remains, and works to promote access to and appreciation of the site by both Egyptian and international visitors. Visit <http://www.amarnatrust.com/> or <http://www.justgiving.com/amarnatrust> or donate at <http://new.thebiggive.org.uk/project/great-entemple>

THE AMARNA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

North Americans can support The Amarna Project and other Amarna Period excavations and projects with donation to The Amarna Research Foundation: <http://www.theamarnaresearchfoundation.org/>

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¹ Lichtheim, Miriam. "Part One: Monumental Inscriptions." *Ancient Egyptian Literature: The New Kingdom*. 1973. Reprint. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006. 11-78. Print.

² Grajetzki, Wolfram, and Stephen Quirke. "Amarna." *Digital Egypt for Universities*. University College London, n.d. Web. 15 Dec. 2013. <<http://www.digitalegypt.ac.uk/amarna/index>>

³ Borchardt is remembered for his discovery of the Bust of Nefertiti from the house of the sculptor Thutmose.

⁴ Excavations at the site were conducted simultaneously alongside those being conducted by Thomas Eric Peet, Sir Leonard Woolley and Francis Newton.

HOUSEHOLD ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT

Miriam Müller

The site of Tell el-Dab'a has been excavated for more than 45 years by the Austrian Archaeological Institute under the direction of Manfred Bietak and from 2009 onwards under the direction of Irene Forstner-Müller. Situated at a strategic point in the eastern Nile Delta adjacent to one of the main Delta branches, the area was first settled in the early Middle Kingdom and soon developed into a major trade hub of the second millennium BC. Famous for its multi-cultural nature, the city was a melting pot for settlers from the Levant and local Egyptians as well as merchants from the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus and the Aegean. In the course of the excavations different components of the city have been brought to light such as palaces, temples, residential areas and cemeteries and an extensive¹ geophysical survey has clarified the topography of the city and especially the position of various harbors.² Different neighborhoods in the center and at the periphery of the city can be investigated in terms of social hierarchy. An examination of the ancient living conditions and different levels of rank and status of the local population promises to be particularly revealing for a better understanding of this important period in Egyptian history.

Tell el-Dab'a could be identified with ancient Avaris, the city that became the capital of the first foreign dynasty in Egypt. The so-called Hyksos, "rulers of the foreign lands" who had their origin in the northern Levant ruled over parts of Egypt for a

period of about 100 years in the Second Intermediate Period (1638-1530BC).³ Evidence for the Hyksos rule is sparse and in particular their coming into power is uncertain. Asiatics settled in this favourable location from the Late Middle Kingdom onwards (ca. 1800BC). Whereas the historiography of Manetho, a priest who wrote down the first history of Egypt in the Ptolemaic era (3rd century BC), narrates a violent invasion by the kings from the East (quoted by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus in his opus *Contra Apionem*⁴), the archaeological record at Tell el-Dab'a supports a peaceful transition at a time when the Egyptian kingship had lost its power and the country was divided in various smaller kingdoms. Recent excavations at Tell el-Dab'a uncovered the probable palace of the Hyksos kings and a fragment of a cuneiform letter in Old Babylonian script which is the earliest attestation of political relations with the East.⁵ A picture of the mixed population living in this cosmopolite city can be gained at the household level.

The investigation of households, already well implemented in the archaeological research in neighboring regions (e.g., in the Levant), has only recently gained attention in Egyptology. Traditionally, the study of household composition, family concepts and social hierarchy had been based on the analysis of house architecture, especially size and specific in-built features.⁶ Investigations of social concepts such as family structure were almost exclu-



Photo of the Excavation

sively based on textual evidence.⁷ These studies until quite recently did not consider artifacts found within the domestic sphere that could give evidence for the activities carried out inside the house and thus display household behavior. This approach is all the more understandable in view of the late focus on settlement archaeology from the mid 20th century onwards and the usual separation of architecture and finds in the publications. With the experience of long-term settlement excavations and refined techniques as well as new approaches in the presentation of the results, the archaeology of households can now take the next step. Adhering to the principles laid out by Mesoamerican scholars in the 1980s⁸ and subsequently adopted by Classical and Near Eastern archaeologists⁹, the study of households comprises the social, material and behavioral component and is thus concerned with the demographic unit often based on kinship, the dwelling, its installations and artifacts found therein and the activities conducted by the household inside the dwelling. With household archaeology incorporated in new projects in Egypt and Sudan as well as the reappraisal of old material the latest seminar and lecture series at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (March 2013) featured seven contributions on household studies in Egypt.¹⁰

A neighborhood in the center of Tell el-Dab'a (F/I) excavated in the 1980s yielded sufficient material for a diachronic comparison of different households, since it displays a development over a period of about 120 years from the late Middle Kingdom to the Second Intermediate Period.¹¹ The window into this neighborhood presents five estates that are separated by streets and alleys and gradually enlarged in the course of four generations.¹² A typical estate features a large house surrounded by courtyard area with storage facilities and is enclosed by a wall. A peculiarity of this neighborhood and of all the other residential areas of the city is the Near Eastern custom of burying the deceased within the settlement, in courtyards, under house floors and in so-called houses of the dead, small rooms attached to the houses that comprise a main tomb and often further smaller tombs along the sides.¹³ According to the analysis of the human remains from the tombs inside and the close proximity to the dwellings, these houses of the dead can be identified as family vaults. A detailed analysis of the actual house comprises an examination of the architecture, in-built features and the distribution of finds.¹⁴ After two generations in this neighborhood and constant remodeling and enlargement of the houses a

standard house type emerges that is also known from other settlement sites in Egypt.¹⁵ It features a tripartite layout with a central room flanked by a secondary chamber on either side. These core rooms are preceded by an elaborate entrance sequence consisting of a projecting small entrance room and a broad vestibule (Fig.1). In order to reach the central room of the house, the entrant thus had to take a number of ninety degree turns that prevented the direct view into the innermost rooms of the house and also disoriented the entering person supported by changing lighting.¹⁶ In-built features such as a typical niche in one of the secondary chambers indicative of the location of a bed frame, but also specific objects found on the floors of the building such as vessels, grinding facilities and fireplaces hint at a functional differentiation of the various rooms. Whereas the areas for the family and the reception of visitors are distinguished by an elaborate brick pavement, rooms for food processing and storage had only earthen floors, sometimes coated with a white-wash (Fig.2).

Subsidiary smaller buildings displaying typical household activities as well as a number of silos with an enormous grain storage capacity on the estates (Fig.3) point at extended households with nuclear families living in the large houses and dependants and servants inhabiting the smaller subsidiary dwellings and huts.¹⁷ The constant enlargement and remodeling of the main houses furthermore display household lifecycles. Over the course of the years a single household consisted of a varying number and composition of its members. Apart from the couple and its children the household could also include unmarried or widowed relatives. Upon the father's death the responsibility for the household was then transferred to the oldest son.¹⁸ The lavish estates and large houses that are built over the course of four generations show the possibility for upward social mobility. In a period of destabilization of kingship and a resulting decentralization of the Egyptian state, life in this neighborhood is characterized by prosperity very likely granted by the favourable circumstances of the city's role as major trading center in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the absence of titles that would have been found on the scarabs accompanying the household masters in their tombs and indicate a governmental affiliation and an elite status, one is tempted to interpret the archaeological record as evidence for a wealthy upper middle class.

Wolfgang Grajetzki's tentative characterization of Middle Kingdom society comprising a middle class of well-trained craftsmen, traders or rich farmers with some servants would then fit well with the evidence. Whether we are however dealing with "invis-

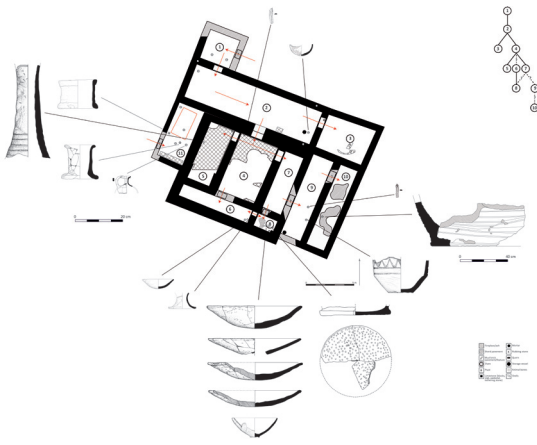


Fig. 1 - House

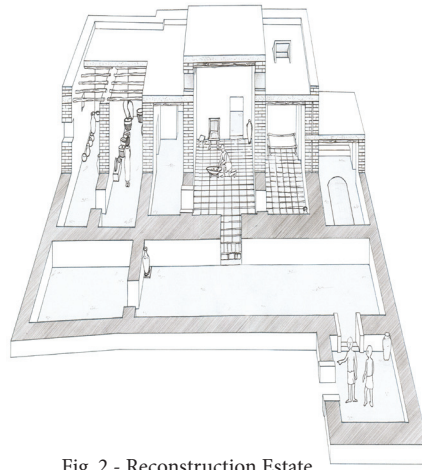


Fig. 2 - Reconstruction Estate



Fig. 3 - Estate

ible elites" given the uncertainties as to the "hidden" ranks of the household masters and eventually whether the inhabitants of this neighborhood considered their own position in quite a different way, will, in the absence of written documents, remain in the dark for the present-day viewer. The detailed analysis of the different households however presents us with a clearer understanding of the living conditions of the local population and leaves us with a better view on the period leading to the takeover of power by the Hyksos kings.

Biography:

Dr. Miriam Müller is the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago Postdoctoral Fellow 2012-14. After receiving her MA from the

University of Heidelberg she worked on material from the site of Tell el-Dab'a in the eastern Nile Delta for her PhD which she finished in 2012 at the University of Vienna. She has participated in excavations in Germany, Austria, Israel and Egypt. On the occasion of the 38th SSEA symposium "Cities in the Sand: Urban Life in Ancient Egypt" (Toronto) Miriam introduced recent developments in settlement archaeology and particularly the latest research in the study of households in Egypt. She would like to thank the SSEA for supporting her participation as the Patricia Pace Fund sponsored speaker. The symposium was held in honor of Prof. John Holladay to whom she dedicated her lecture based on household archaeology and recent finds from Tell el-Dab'a, a site that is closely connected to Prof. Holladay's own research at Tell el-Maskhuta in Wadi Tumilat.

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¹⁰ *Household Studies in Complex Societies. (Micro) Archaeological and Textual Approaches*, edited by M. Müller. Oriental Institute Series 10. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, forthcoming.

¹¹ Manfred Bietak, "Eine Palastanlage aus der Zeit des späten Mittleren Reichs und andere Forschungsergebnisse aus dem östlichen Nildelta (Tell el-Dab'a 1979 - 1984)." *Anzeiger der Philosophisch-Historischen Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 121 (1984): 312-349 and Manfred Bietak, "Ägypten", "Tell el-Dab'a". *Beiblatt: Grabungen, Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 55 (1984): 1-9.

¹² One phase is equated with a building generation of about 30 years.

¹³ Edwin C.M. Van den Brink, *Tombs and Burial Customs at Tell el-Dab'a and Their Cultural Relationship to Syria-Palestine during the Second Intermediate Period*, Beiträge zur Ägyptologie 4. Wien: AFRO-PUB, 1982.

¹⁴ Since the excavations were undertaken in the 1980s, micro archaeological studies such as analyses of floor deposits, a common practice today, could thus not be included. For an overview on the wide range of micro archaeological techniques see Steven Weiner, *Microarchaeology. Beyond the Visible Archaeological Record*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

¹⁵ For different house types in Egypt see Manfred Bietak, "Zum Raumprogramm ägyptischer Wohnhäuser des Mittleren und Neuen Reiches." In *Haus und Palast im alten Ägypten. Internationales Symposium, 8. bis 11. April 1992 in Kairo*, edited by M. Bietak, 23-43. *Untersuchungen der Zweigstelle Kairo des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes* 14. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996.

¹⁶ This concept was convincingly pointed out by Kate Spence, "Settlement Structure and Social Interaction at El-Amarna." In *Cities and Urbanism in Ancient Egypt. Papers from a Workshop in November 2006 at the Austrian Academy of Sciences*, edited by M. Bietak et al., pp. 289-298. *Untersuchungen der Zweigstelle Kairo des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes* 35. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010.

¹⁷ For the same phenomenon at Amarna, see Barry J. Kemp, "Leben in Amarna." In *Amarna. Lebensräume - Lebensbilder - Weltbilder*, edited by C. Tietze, 266-275. Potsdam: Universitätsverlag, 2008.

¹⁸ See Katalin A. Kóthay, "Houses and Households at Kahun: Bureaucratic and Domestic Aspects of Social Organization during the Middle Kingdom." In "*le lotus qui sort de terre*": Mélanges offerts à Edith Varga, edited by H. Györy, 352-355. *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts - Supplément* 2001. Budapest: Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts, 2001. Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*. London-New York: Routledge, 2006 (second edition), 119.

¹⁹ This idea is further expanded in my forthcoming article "Late Middle Kingdom Society in a Neighborhood of Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris." In *Household Studies in Complex Societies. (Micro) Archaeological and Textual Approaches*, edited by M. Müller. Oriental Institute Series 10. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

²⁰ Wolfgang Grajetzki, *The Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt. History, Archaeology and Society*. London: Duckworth, 2006, 151.

²¹ Juan C. Moreno García, "Limits of Pharaonic Administration: Patronage, Informal Authorities, 'Invisible Elites' and Mobile Populations." In *Diachronic Trends in Ancient Egyptian History. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Eva Pardey*, edited by M. Barta and H. Küllmer, 88-101. Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Arts, 2013.

THE CALVERLY ARTEFACT PROJECT: A BRIEF REPORT AND UPDATE

Amber Hutchinson

Since 2006, the SSEA project, *In Search of Ancient Egypt in Canada*, has been dedicated to finding and documenting Egyptian antiquities in Museum collections across Canada. Many of these collections have never been extensively studied or published, especially those residing in small institutions. This was the case with a collection of Egyptian artefacts discovered in Oakville, Ontario at the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre.¹ The collection, which is now under the ownership of the Centre's founder Sybil Rampen, was acquired by Rampen's aunt, Amice Calverley (1896-1959; Fig. 1) during the time she worked as an epigrapher and illustrator at the Seti I temple in Abydos in the 1920s.² Calverley's exquisite artistic talents are renowned in the Egyptological community thanks to the Egypt Exploration Society's publications of the Seti I temple reliefs.³

After the initial visit to Joshua Creek, and upon closer inspection of the objects, it became immediately clear that the artefacts required further examination. Consequently, under the aegis of *In Search of Ancient Egypt in Canada*, the Calverly Artefact Project (CAP) was established in 2011. CAP is a joint project by the

SSEA, the University of Toronto's Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and Sybil Rampen of the Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre. Its primary objective is to catalogue and study the collection of Egyptian artefacts brought to Canada by Calverley. The team consists of: Mark Trumpour, coordinator; Gabriele Cole, photographer; Meredith Brand, researcher; Amber Hutchinson, researcher; Prof. Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner and Prof. Ronald J. Leprohon, academic advisors, for the study phase of the project; and Dan Downey and Toby Perez, web-designers. The bulk of the project work commenced throughout February and March 2012 at Joshua Creek. Thanks to the kind hospitality of Mrs. Rampen, the team had access to a bright, spacious work space at the Centre for identifying, sorting, cataloguing, photographing, and drawing the objects. To date, CAP has catalogued 165 items in the collection. These artefacts were labelled and stored in individual polyvinyl bags, photographed, and entered into a spreadsheet recording the key information for each object with assigned accession numbers. Select items were also drawn to illustrate size, shape, and specific



Fig. 1 - Amice Mary Calverley



Fig. 2. Faience tubular beads

features. The collection comprises a range of small objects, which includes beads, amulets, shabtis, scarabs, miniature pottery vessels, glass, moulds, coins, and other miscellaneous items. Unfortunately, none of the objects have an exact provenance within the site of Abydos. However, select artefacts have been researched and examined in greater detail, which sheds light on their significance. The details of this research will be provided in a separate publication.⁴ What follows is a brief overview and general description of the objects.

The largest category of objects in Calverley's collection is beads, of which there are over one hundred small blue faience tubular types commonly found at excavation sites across Egypt (Fig. 2). There are also a few larger glass beads, which are generally spheroid in shape and opaque with yellow, red, white, and green designs, as well as larger faience beads, including one crumb bead. Amulets were also abundant in the collection with 73 examples that include plant, animal, and deity forms, such as Bastet and Bes amulets. There are also approximately 14 Wadjet eye amulets, most of which seem to date to the later periods. The shabtis in the collection all seem to date to the Third Intermediate Period (Fig. 3). Six of these are complete specimens that are all in fairly good shape, although some features are worn. Two examples are missing the feet and two other pieces are only foot fragments. The shabtis range in height from about 4 cm to 7 cm and are made of faience or Nile clay. Additionally, there are a total of thirteen scarabs in the collection, which vary in date and have a variety of designs. Most are amuletic types having an inscription or design on the base.⁵

Four miniature pots in the collection are made of Nile clay and can be classified into the broader category of miniature vessels and votive dishes that have been found associated with cult activities in Egypt since at least the Old Kingdom.⁶ There are also a few sherds from faience and glass vessels in Calverley's collection, but these have not been extensively examined to date. The other objects in the collection include four necklaces made of stone and faience beads. One nice example is made of disc shaped carnelian beads with two amulets and a button seal (Fig. 4). There are also two bronze coins, metal tweezers, rings, clay moulds for amulets, and a ceramic lamp, among a couple other miscellaneous items. In

all, these artefacts represent a significant collection of small finds that highlight the diverse funerary and votive activities at Abydos throughout its history.

Currently, The CAP team is continuing to conduct research in order to shed ever more light on the significance, function, and dating of the Calverley artefacts within the context of the religious landscape of Abydos. Steps have also been taken towards the creation of an online "virtual museum" to display images and key information about the objects in a forum that will be accessible to the public. Access to the site will be linked through the Joshua Creek website. It is the team's hope that this will enable the collection to be viewed and perpetuated by both academic scholars and the general public well into the future.



Fig. 3. Calverley's shabtis

Sources:

1. For more information about Joshua Creek, please visit the Centre's website at www.joshuacreekarts.com.
2. The life and history of Amice Calverley can be found in the following sources: Barbara S. Lesko, "Amice Mary Calverley, 1896-1959" *Breaking Ground: Women in Old World Archaeology, Web Based Project*, eds. Martha Sharp Joukowsky and Barbara S. Lesko



Fig. 4. Carnelian beaded necklace

(Brown University, 2003) at http://www.brown.edu/Research/Breaking_Ground/results.php?d=1&first=Amice%20Mary&last=Caverley; Morris. L. Bierbrier, ed., *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, Fourth Revised Edition (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2012); Janet Leveson-Gower and Alan. H. Gardiner, "Amice Calverley," *JEA* 45 (1959): 85-87; Mark Trumpour, "Egypt in Canada: More Hidden Treasures," *SSEA Newsletter* 1 (2009-10).

3. Alan H. Gardiner, ed., *The Temple of King Sethos I at Abydos*, copied by Amice M. Calverley with the assistance of Myrtle F. Broome, vols. 1-4 (London: Egypt Exploration Society; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933-1958).

4. An article for the *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* has been prepared and submitted for publication.

5. Six of the scarabs were singled out and examined in detail. The results of this work have been prepared for the separate publication mentioned in footnote 4.

6. Susan Allen, "Miniature and Model Vessels in Ancient Egypt," in *The Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology: Proceedings of the Conference Held in Prague, May 31st-June 4th, 2004*, ed. Miroslav Bárta (Prague: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 2006).

"A DAY IN THE LIFE..." - PERSONAL DIG DIARIES

Rexine Hummel

June 7, 2013

We landed in Cairo at 5 AM and I had to wait until 8:30 to catch my plane to Luxor. By then it was getting hot but a comfortable 32 degrees. The first thing that I did was turn on the air conditioning, got out of my hot sticky travelling clothes and into a cool flimsy nightgown and went out onto the balcony to look at my glorious view of the river and the mountains on the other side. It was not until I tried to get back in that I discovered that I had locked myself out! I was in Luxor less than 30 minutes and I was already trapped on my balcony in the heat and not really dressed for the occasion. I clawed frantically at the door trying to open it. It would not budge. I thought this only happened in movies. All the other balconies that I could see were empty of people. I finally had to lean over the rail and yell down 6 floors to some tourists sitting at a table below. It took a while before they realized that a voice was yelling from above but they did call over a waiter and pointed up to me. Luckily I am in the end room at the front because I yelled out the wrong room number to him. Eventually a laughing desk clerk and houseman rescued me. I am probably the subject of their family dinner conversation tonight.

By 12 noon I needed to go out and buy bottled water since it is outrageously expensive in the hotel. As soon as I reached the sidewalk in front of the hotel a caleche driver attached himself to me like adhesive tape and insisted he knew a market that was open (it was prayer time on Friday and a silly time for me to be out but I was really thirsty).

We walked much further than he had suggested but finally found a kiosk with water. I bought three 1.5 litre bottles and my cling-on insisted on packing the bottles into my bag during which time he dropped one on my little toe injuring it. He carried the bag back to the hotel apologizing profusely as I limped along behind him. I put them into my fridge to cool and when at 1 PM I took one out for a drink I made the delightful discovery that two out of the three bottles had their lids tampered with and were probably filled with tap water (At least I hope it is tap water). I have a kettle in my room so I have been boiling the water and saving the good bottle for work tomorrow.

It is only 3PM and I am still tired but now have a black toe and have suffered grave indignities to my pride. I have, however, learned some valuable lessons. Later I will go down and see what the charges are for the internet. I wonder what tomorrow will bring?

June 10

I finally got connected to the internet. The hotel costs \$9.00 for 30 minutes so I had our Egyptian foreman Omar Farouk activate my vodaphone which is like the Roger's stick in Canada. Thankfully, one of the young people who was born with a computer gene helped me install it.

As today progressed my throat began to hurt a little. I

think my glands are trying to fight off something because it hurts to swallow. The team are going out for dinner this evening but I am going to lie low and try and get rid of this affliction. I haven't been out of the hotel since the first day on my water hunt because it has been so hot. I haven't even used the pool since it is open to the sun and burning hot. I have been out on my balcony at 2 and 4 AM and it is still hot. Very hot water even comes out of the cold water tap so cold showers are out of the question. Thank goodness the hotel is very nice and comfortable. Air conditioning in these conditions is a necessity. I have pottery work that I can do in the afternoons so the time is not wasted.

Friday June 14

It is still very hot and I go back to my room each day at 1:30 and shower and collapse. After about an hour in a coma I can work again on looking up parallels for my pots to help in their dating. For lunch I usually have a snack from the breakfast buffet and for dinner I sometimes order room service. Bedtime is early. The young team often goes out for dinner and they always invite me so I can go whenever I want. Sometimes, I find that it is just too hot to go walking to a restaurant. Many of the team members go shopping or visit tourist sites in the afternoon. Over the years I have seen almost all of them. Last night I went with the girls on a shopping trip. On the way back we were persuaded by a 10 year old named Ali to take his caleche that was driven by his younger brother. His English was amazing and he revealed that he knew our exact daily schedule and offered to wait at our hotel each day at 5 PM after we had rested and eaten and he would take us to see wonderful things in Luxor. Obviously there are no secrets in this city.

I am staying healthy but my one knee does not like all the uneven ground and the jumps and acrobatics needed to get off and on the boat.

Sunday June 16

Last night I went out with the girls to eat at an Indian restaurant. We were the only ones in there. My knee is acting up again so embarking on the boat has become an even greater challenge. The boatman who is probably half my weight tried to pull me up on to the pedestal with both hands, lost his balance and we both wobbled and gyrated until some security men ran over and added some extra hands.

The work continues and I am still drawing pottery without seeing an end to it. My table is set on the path to the local village and people are passing through all the time on foot, bicycle, and donkey cart. Each morning the fuul cart rumbles by. Fuul is the local thick bean soup stewed in tomatoes and spices. It cooks in a special pot and is served in a piece of bread. It is delicious and is the predominant food of the poor. This fellow's mother probably simmers it all night so that he can take it to the market and sell it. I managed to get a photo of him and the big pot in the cart this morning going past me.

Tomorrow I am to be taken to the huge district store house to look at the pottery stored there from other years. I only have three more days in Egypt and still more work than I can handle. I meet the group again in the lobby at six tonight and we are going for an English roast beef Sunday dinner at a restaurant owned by an ex-pat British lady. I leave Luxor Wednesday evening after working all day and fly out of Cairo near midnight.

Biography:

Rexine Hummel, a long-time SSEA member and current trustee, is an experienced ceramicist who has worked on numerous projects, including the Akhenaten Temple Project, the Mendes Expedition, the El-Markha Plain Project, and the University of Arizona Egyptian Expedition.

CALL FOR ARTICLES FOR THE JOURNAL OF THE SSEA

The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities is soliciting articles for upcoming volumes of the *Journal of The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* (JSSEA). These may be concerned with any aspect of pre-pharaonic, pharaonic or Coptic Egypt. Articles submitted are subject to a peer review process. Submissions are accepted in English, French, and German. The deadline for submission of articles to be included in the next volume (40) is March 31, 2014. For subsequent volumes the deadline will be January 31st of each year. For more information or questions regarding the Guidelines for Contributors, is it http://www.thessea.org/journal_submissions.php. For any questions beyond the materials presented there please email journal@thessea.org.

- The Editors of the JSSEA, The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities/Société pour l'Étude de l'Égypte Ancienne

APPEL D'ARTICLES POUR LE JOURNAL OF THE SSEA

La Société pour l'étude de l'Égypte ancienne sollicite auprès de la communauté scientifique des articles pour les prochains volumes du Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (JSSEA).

Les articles, rédigés en anglais, français ou allemand, peuvent aborder les aspects les plus divers en rapport avec l'Égypte prédynastique, pharaonique ou copte. Les articles seront soumis à un

processus d'évaluation par les pairs. Veuillez noter que la date limite pour la soumission des articles pour le prochain volume (40) est le 31 mars 2014. La date limite pour la soumission des articles pour les volumes suivants est le 31 janvier de chaque année.

Pour obtenir les recommandations à l'intention des auteurs, veuillez visiter http://www.thessea.org/journal_submissions.php. Pour obtenir les plus amples renseignements non compris dans le document au sujet des recommandations pour les auteurs, veuillez envoyer un courriel à journal@thessea.org.

-Le comité rédactionnel du JSSEA, The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities/Société pour l'étude de l'Égypte ancienne

TORONTO CHAPTER REPORT

Christina Geisen

Greetings from the Toronto Chapter! Our members have been spoiled this lecture series so far, as we were able to organize two extra presentations. The series started off with an event co-sponsored with the Royal Ontario Museum; Barry Kemp (University of Cambridge; Director of the Amarna Project) spoke on *The City of the Sun God: Amarna and its rulers*, followed by a book-signing. Only a couple of days later, Professor Dr. Pascal Vernus (University Paris Sorbonne) presented on *The Status of Authoritative Texts in Pharaonic Egypt*. Our members also enjoyed lectures by Professor Dr. Ronald J. Leprohon (University of Toronto) on *A Wall for All Seasons*. The Funerary Chapel of Paheri at el-Kab as well as by Professor Dr. Laurel Bestock (Brown University) on *A Forgotten Fortress: Returning to Lower Nubia*. Finally we heard Dr. Cédric Gobeil (Director of the French Archaeological Mission at Deir el-Medina/IFAO) talking about Current work and latest discoveries of the French Archaeological Mission in Deir el-Medina, as well as Aleksandra Ksiezak (University of Toronto) about Possible use of honey in ancient Egyptian beer brewing. Speakers for the spring term include Professor Dr. Nancy Lovell (University of Alberta), Stéphanie Briaud (University of Montreal), as well as Meredith Brand and Douglas Petrovitch (both University of Toronto).

Besides the lecture series, our members enjoyed the course *From Aswan to Ashur: Trade, Treachery and Tradition in the Relationship between Egypt and Mesopotamia* by Gayle Gibson (Royal Ontario Museum). Two courses will be offered during the

spring term, starting in January. Dr. Lyn Green will teach on the *Lady of the House, Lady of the Lands: Women in Ancient Egypt*, and Janet Khoo (University of Toronto) will present on *Stories from Skeletons: Physical Anthropology and the Study of Ancient Egypt*.

In addition, we organized a movie night, where we watched *The Egyptian*, and we are organizing a trip for the summer right now to the Stratford Festival to see *Antony and Cleopatra*. Our summer lecture series will focus on Ptolemaic Egypt to provide our members with background information on the play.

In October the Toronto Chapter held its annual meeting, and we are happy to announce the following council members for the year 2013/2014: Dr. Christina Geisen (President), Dr. Lyn Green, Zoe McQuinn, Deirdre Keleher, Arlette Londes (Vice-Presidents), Erin Kerr (Treasurer), Meredith Brand (Secretary), Les O'Connor, Amber Hutchinson, Sami Akhnoukh (Members at Large) as well as Silvia Zago and Aleksandra Ksiezak (Adjunct Members). I would like to thank all council members for their work in the last year, and the new council is looking forward to a new exciting year with a lot of events.

Every year, the Toronto Chapter has a competition for the Nicholas B. Millet Memorial Scholarship, sponsoring a graduate student's research in the field of Egyptology. I would like to congratulate Meredith Brand (University of Toronto) for receiving the scholarship this year. She will present her results in February in the framework of our lecture series. The Toronto Chapter wishes everyone all the best for the year 2014. - Christina Geisen

THE NEW CANADIAN OPERA "ISIS AND OSIRIS"

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2010, during the visit of the exhibition "*King Tut: The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs*", a number of other Egypt-related events took place at the Art Gallery of Ontario. On one Wednesday at the end of March, local SSEA members gathered informally at the AGO to enjoy a preview of the opera, "*Isis and Osiris*". In early December 2013, another opportunity arose for SSEA members to enjoy more of this work at a fundraising event and "birthday party" for the opera. Thomas Greiner reviewed the event for us:

A SNEAK PREVIEW

"On Monday December 2, 2013, an exciting event was organized to take place at Heliconian Hall in Toronto. It was to be an evening of fundraising, of listening to the musical prowess of Canadian composer Peter-Anthony Togni and of appreciating the spoken word of Toronto poet, Sharon Singer. Also, on a much grander scale, this evening was to give the audience a sneak preview, an excerpt of the love scene, of the forthcoming Canadian opera set in ancient Egypt: "*Isis and Osiris*". We got to listen as Isis and Osiris sang about the struggle he faced with his brother, Seth. This opera has been years in the making as Sharon Singer told us about her years of fascination with ancient Egypt that enthused her to undertake this project. Together with the music of Peter-Anthony Togni, Sharon Singer gave us a preview of what was to come and with the excitement that was ever present in the audience, it sure

made for a night to remember. In the excerpt of the Opera that we witnessed, we could hear Isis and Osiris in a discussion about the evil doings of Osiris' brother, Seth. The words that were sung were married elegantly to the music, though I am sure they will sound grander yet, when the final version of the opera will make its world premiere upon the stage." More about the evening can be found at his blog, *Ancient Egypt and a Maple Leaf* [thomasgreiner.com]

ABOUT THE OPERA

The new Canadian opera "*Isis and Osiris*" by librettist Sharon Singer and composer Peter-Anthony Togni is based on the greatest myth of ancient Egypt. The story of Isis and Osiris lends itself extremely well to the operatic form, as nothing less than a grand conception can hope to convey the larger-than-life tale of the first great love story in world literature with its elements of incest, sibling jealousy and fratricide, the quest for immortality and an archetypal battle between good and evil.

"*Isis and Osiris*" is the first opera to mine dramatic material from the riches of ancient Egyptian myth - before the Greeks, before the Romans, there was the Egyptian empire that lasted for thousands of years and it is upon this culture that much of western civilization is forged. Building on the operatic successes of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Philip Glass' *Akhenaten* and Verdi's grand opera *Aida*, one of the most popular operas ever written. [www.aria-works.ca]

“We are currently raising funds to enable the composer to complete writing the musical score.”

THE INSPIRATION:

Sharon Singer

“I have been fascinated by ancient Egypt since my early 20s, and have collected an excellent library of books on ancient Egypt, focusing on ancient Egyptian life and culture, history and archaeology, literature and religious texts. I was a member of the SSEA for many years and attended numerous all-day SSEA Symposia at the ROM and other locations. The story of Isis and Osiris is so compelling to me, so powerful that it just called out to be written as an opera and to be set to music. The characters are so distinct, and their relationships so intricate and complex. One of the most captivating aspects for me is the great love between Isis and Osiris, a love that is able to persist against unthinkable odds and even conquer death. I relate to the thoughts of Russian film director Aleksandr Sokurov who said, “In history we talk about what happened. In art we talk about what might have happened. All-encompassing love might not exist in real life, but art says it might exist.”

A BRIEF HISTORY:

This project has been in development for several years. When I discovered that the AGO was presenting the King Tutankhamun Exhibit, I approached them with a proposal to present the first public performance of this ancient Egyptian opera. The day they said yes was a huge step in the realization of this project. The AGO did not want a full-length opera, so we presented a 30 minute version during that exhibit. Director Guillermo Silva-Marin, the General Director of VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert, staged the work, found the singers, and we co-produced a very successful standing-room only event that is still listed on the AGO website.

In July of 2013 we recorded the Love Scene from “*Isis and Osiris*” at the CBC and presented the first live public performance of an excerpt of this scene at Heliconian Hall on December 2, 2013 to a rousing reception. This event was a concert and fundraiser for the development of the opera with the composer Peter-Anthony Togni at the keyboard, and mezzo soprano Andrea Ludwig and tenor Joseph Angelo singing the roles of Isis and Osiris.

We are currently raising funds to enable the composer to complete writing the musical score. Once that is done we will be producing a full workshop production, and then on to the world premiere at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts under the direction of Guillermo Silva-Marin and VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert.

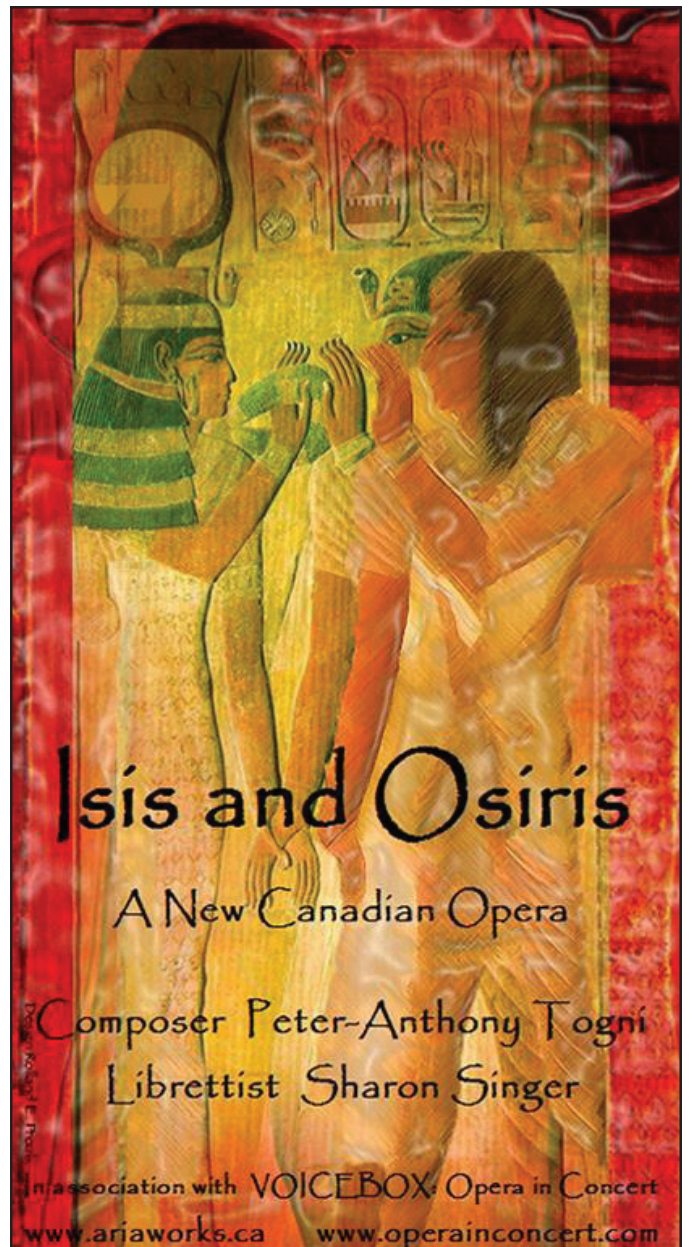
THE COMPOSER

Peter Anthony Togni, the award-winning composer of “*Isis and Osiris*” is known from coast-to-coast for his well-loved CBC Radio shows including Choral Concert. The recipient of numerous commissions, he has composed many choral and instrumental works and performed his work at Roy Thompson Hall, the Moscow Conservatory, the Oriental Arts Centre in Shanghai, and for His Holi-

ness Pope John Paul II. Togni’s works have been released on many labels including ECM Records, CBC Records, Hänssler Classics, and Warner Classics UK. In 2012, Togni was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee Medal. [www.petertogni.com]

ABOUT SHARON SINGER:

Sharon Singer, the librettist of “*Isis and Osiris*” is a writer and poet, and founder of Ariaworks, the co-producing partner for this project. Sharon has collaborated with a number of composers including Philip McConnell, Marko Lukac and Richard P. Elliott. A former journalist writing for the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail, Sharon has four published poetry books to her credit and three CDs featuring her work, including “*Global Warming*” a spoken work collaboration with renowned New York jazz saxophone player Bob Mover. [www.sharonsinger.com]



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