

WHAT'S ON

G E T I N V O L V E D

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Mustapha Akkad

Viva Cinema

Qatna Kingdom Of Glory

QATNA KINGDOM OF GLORY



H.E. Excellency Mrs. Asma Al-Assad and Mr. Angelo Filari

Her Excellency Mrs. Asma Al Assad was awarded the Paystum Prize for Archeology in appreciation for her outstanding support to the excavation digs in Syria. She was awarded by the Mayor of Solerno, Mr. Angelo Filari, at the Mediterranean Exhibition for Archeological Tourism 2005 hosted at the National Museum of Damascus. Her honoring was mostly associated with the excavation taking place at Qatna, a site where the Italian Expedition has been working since 1964. A patron of Syrian art and history, Mrs. Asma Al Assad paid continuous visits to many archeological sites like Ebla and Tel Merdikh that dates back to the Bronze Age.

The Paystum Prize is an artistic prize called 'Sepulcher of the Diver'. Made out of tiny pieces of ceramic, it is carefully crafted by artist Jean Kapiti. 'Sepulcher of the Diver' is a small replica of the large historic original displayed at the National Museum of Archeology in Paystum. The piece is priceless in its artistic and historic value as it is the only Greek mural painted on the cover of the Sepulcher dating back to 480 BC. It represents a man diving into water, a symbol of passing from life to death.

Many speeches were given during the ceremony. The role of a woman in the development of archaeological sites was highlighted. The Minister of Culture, Paolo Mieli, and the Minister of Tourism, Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, were also present. The exhibition is held at the National Museum of Qatna.





Many respected personalities attended the event and speeches were given commending Her Excellency's effective role in archeological conservation. Her direct follow up on sites was praised and her encouragement strengthened the cultural bond between Syria and Italy. Key speakers included the Minister of Culture Mahmoud Al Sayed, Italian Professor Paolo Mérier, Director of Mediterranean Stock for Travel and Tourism Luigi Giordano, and Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of Syria Dr. Michel Maqdoosi.

Qatna's 'Kingdom of Glory' Exhibit Hall was opened by Her



Excellency as Ministers, Ambassadors and well regarded public figures followed at her side. The royal treasure found inside an ancient king's tomb comprised of 400 relics uncovered by Syrian/Italian/German coordinated efforts from 1999 -2005. Uncovered relics included a basalt statue of the king sitting on his throne dating back to 1600 BC, 50 clay tablets with cuneiform writing dating back to 1300 BC, 500 pieces of dexterously engraved ivory and bronze weapons. A golden duck and many more priceless items were also uncovered. One of the most popular exhibits was a human skeleton documenting one of time's first assassinations. Mishlfeh, the ancient city of Qatna, is an important passage into the gates of history on a land that cradled civilization from the beginning of time, Syria.

In that regard, the Italian government offered to restructure the National Museum of Damascus, the Damascus Citadel, and the Museums of Aleppo, Palmyra and Idlib. Their offer further extended to train Syrian personnel and grant scholarships to Syrian students into the Italian University of Udine, where students can obtain PhDs in Archeology.

