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Exhibition Dates:

September 17, 2024 – March 23, 2025

Exhibition Location:

ISAC Museum

1155 E. 58TH St.

Chicago, IL 60637

Press/Members preview:

September 16, 2024

5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Exhibition Webpage:

isac.uchicago.edu/chicagonile

ISAC

The University of Chicago

1155 E. 58th St.

Chicago, IL 60637

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For Immediate Release

A new special exhibition at the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum (ISAC Museum) on the campus of the University of Chicago celebrates one-hundred years of fieldwork by the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor, Egypt

In 1924, an Egyptologist, an artist, and a photographer—the staff of the University of Chicago’s new Epigraphic Survey—began the task of recording the scenes and inscriptions carved on the walls of the enormous, 3,000-year-old temple of Pharaoh Ramesses III at Medinet Habu near Luxor, Egypt. It was the culmination of a long-standing dream of James Henry Breasted, the first American Egyptologist and founder of ISAC (then the Oriental Institute), to both copy and publish *all* the historical texts in the Nile Valley. The Epigraphic Survey was established to undertake this unimaginably ambitious program of field research.

Beginning September 17, 2024, the ISAC Museum invites the public to celebrate the centennial of this project, with a special exhibition that examines some of the most important—and endangered—records to survive from ancient Egypt. *Chicago on the Nile* features photographs, artifacts, original artworks, and publications that illuminate a century of endeavor to preserve the records of Egypt’s ancient past, along with engaging accounts of life and work at Chicago House in Luxor over the past one-hundred years.

This exhibition is curated by Emily Teeter, J. Brett McClain, and Catherine Witt, and organized by the ISAC Museum; it is supported by a generous grant from the Women’s Board of the University of Chicago, ISAC Museum visitors, and ISAC members.

This free special exhibition runs from September 17, 2024, through March 23, 2025, at the ISAC Museum.

**The Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum
The University of Chicago
*Chicago on the Nile***

The Epigraphic Survey process:

J. Brett McClain and Jen Kimpton, Egyptologists separately compare notes about the decoration of a wall, then they meet with artist, Keli Alberts to reach a consensus about details that need to be added to the facsimile drawing.

Luxor, Egypt

Photo by W. R. Johnson

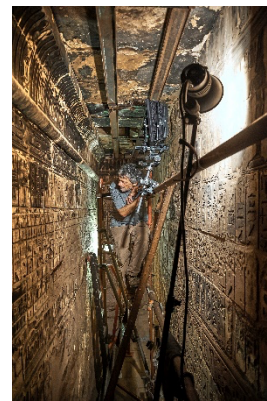


Epigraphic Survey photography:

Yarko Kobylecky documenting scenes in a narrow passageway using an improvised photography set up.

Luxor, Egypt

Photo by A. Tetreault



Epigraphers and artists at work:

Margaret De Jong and J. Brett McClain in the Small Temple of Amun at Medinet Habu.

This monument presents numerous challenges since it was modified numerous times in antiquity, and many of the reliefs have preserved their original painted decoration.

Luxor, Egypt

Photo W.R. Johnson



Chicago House, 1932–1933:
The headquarters of the Epigraphic
Survey in Luxor, Egypt.
Luxor, Egypt
Epigraphic Survey 16276



Academic Staff and visitors, 1927:
The academic staff and visitors at Chicago House.
James Henry Breasted, director of the Oriental
Institute (ISAC) second row from bottom, center, with
Harold Nelson, the first director of the Epigraphic
Survey to his right.
Luxor, Egypt
Epigraphic Survey 1096



Statue, Human:
Seventeen-foot-tall statue discovered by
the Epigraphic Survey at Medinet Habu in
December 1930. Currently in the ISAC Museum.
Luxor, Egypt
ISACM E14088



Column:
Limestone column in the form of a bundle of flowers
discovered by the Epigraphic Survey during excavation
of the Western High Gate at Medinet Habu, 1931–1932.
Today, the Epigraphic Survey is re-investigating this area
of the site.
Luxor, Egypt
ISACM E14089

