

= The Mummy (1999 film) =

The Mummy is a 1999 American action @-@ adventure horror film written and directed by Stephen Sommers and starring Brendan Fraser , Rachel Weisz , John Hannah , and Kevin J. O 'Connor , with Arnold Vosloo in the title role as the reanimated mummy . It is a loose remake of the 1932 film The Mummy , which starred Boris Karloff in the title role .

Filming began in Marrakech , Morocco , on May 4 , 1998 , and lasted seventeen weeks ; the crew had to endure dehydration , sandstorms , and snakes while filming in the Sahara . The visual effects were provided by Industrial Light & Magic , who blended film and computer @-@ generated imagery to create the titular Mummy . Jerry Goldsmith provided the orchestral score .

The Mummy opened on May 7 , 1999 , and grossed \$ 43 million in 3 @,@ 210 theaters during its opening weekend in the United States ; a surprise hit , the film went on to gross \$ 416 million worldwide . The box @-@ office success led to a 2001 sequel , The Mummy Returns , as well as The Mummy : The Animated Series , and the prequel / spin @-@ off film The Scorpion King . Seven years later , the third installment , The Mummy : Tomb of the Dragon Emperor , opened on August 1 , 2008 . Universal Pictures also opened a roller coaster , Revenge of the Mummy , in 2004 . Novelizations of the film and its sequels were written by Max Allan Collins .

= = Plot = =

In Thebes , Egypt , 1290 BC , high priest Imhotep engages in an affair with Anck @-@ su @-@ Namun , the mistress and future wife of Pharaoh Seti I. When the Pharaoh discovers the affair , Imhotep and Anck @-@ su @-@ Namun assassinate him . As Seti 's bodyguards arrive too late to save him , Imhotep flees , while Anck @-@ su @-@ Namun kills herself , intending for Imhotep to resurrect her . Imhotep and his priests steal her corpse and travel to Hamunaptra , the city of the dead , but the resurrection ritual is stopped by Seti 's bodyguards , the Medjai . Imhotep 's priests are all mummified alive , while Imhotep himself is sentenced to suffer the Hom Dai , the worst of Egyptian curses , buried alive with flesh eating scarab beetles . Imhotep is sealed away in a sarcophagus at the feet of a statue of the Egyptian god Anubis and kept under strict surveillance by the Medjai , since if Imhotep were ever to return , the world would be doomed .

In 1925 , Jonathan Carnahan presents his sister Evelyn , a Cairo librarian and aspiring Egyptologist , an intricate box and map . After the pair discover the map leads to Hamunaptra , Jonathan reveals he stole it from an American adventurer , Rick O 'Connell , who encountered the city while in the French Foreign Legion . Rick makes a deal with Evelyn to lead them there if they release him from prison .

Rick leads Evelyn and her party to the city , where the group encounters a band of American treasure hunters guided by Rick 's cowardly colleague Beni Gabor . Shortly after reaching Hamunaptra , the expeditions are then attacked by the Medjai , led by the warrior Ardeth Bay . Despite Ardeth 's warning of the city 's evil , the two expeditions continue to excavate . Evelyn searches for the famous Book of the Living , a book made of pure gold . Instead of finding the book , she , Rick , and Jonathan stumble upon the statue of Anubis and the remains of Imhotep buried underneath . The team of Americans , meanwhile , discover the black Book of the Dead , accompanied by canopic jars carrying Anck @-@ su @-@ Namun 's preserved organs .

At night , Evelyn takes the Book of the Dead and reads a page aloud , accidentally awakening Imhotep . The expeditions return to Cairo , but Imhotep follows them with the help of Beni . Imhotep returns to full strength by killing the Americans one by one , and brings the ten plagues back to Egypt . Seeking a way to stop Imhotep , Rick , Evelyn and Jonathan meet Ardeth at a museum . Ardeth hypothesizes that Imhotep wants to resurrect Anck @-@ su @-@ Namun again and plans to do so by sacrificing Evelyn . Evelyn muses that if the Book of the Dead brought Imhotep back to life , the Book of the Living can kill him again , and deduces the book 's whereabouts . Imhotep corners the group with an army of slaves . Evelyn agrees to accompany Imhotep if he spares the rest of the group .

Imhotep , Evelyn , and Beni return to Hamunaptra , pursued by Rick , Jonathan , and Ardeth .

Imhotep prepares to sacrifice Evelyn , but she is rescued after an intense battle with Imhotep 's mummified priests . When Evelyn reads from the Book of Amun @-@ Ra , Imhotep becomes mortal again and Rick forces him into the River of Death . Rapidly decaying , Imhotep leaves the world of the living , vowing revenge . While looting treasure from the pyramid , Beni accidentally sets off an ancient booby trap and is trapped by a swarm of flesh @-@ eating scarabs as Hamunaptra collapses into the sand . Ardeth rides away as Rick and Evelyn kiss and , with Jonathan , ride off into the sunset on a pair of camels laden with Beni 's treasure .

= = Cast = =

Brendan Fraser as Richard " Rick " O 'Connell

An American adventurer who served in the French Foreign Legion . Producer James Jacks offered the role of Rick O 'Connell to Tom Cruise , Brad Pitt , Matt Damon and Ben Affleck but the actors were not interested or could not fit the role into their respective schedules . Jacks and director Stephen Sommers were impressed with the money that *George of the Jungle* was making at the box office and cast Brendan Fraser as a result ; Sommers also commented that he felt Fraser fit the Errol Flynn swashbuckling character he had envisioned perfectly . The actor understood that his character " doesn 't take himself too seriously , otherwise the audience can 't go on that journey with him " .

Rachel Weisz as Evelyn " Evie " Carnahan

A clumsy yet intelligent Egyptologist . Evelyn undertakes the expedition to Hamunaptra to discover an ancient book , proving herself to her peers . Rachel Weisz was not a big fan of horror films but did not see this film as such . As she said in an interview , " It 's hokum , a comic book world . "

Arnold Vosloo as Imhotep

Pharaoh 's High Priest and one of Pharaoh Seti I 's most trusted advisers , Imhotep betrays his sovereign out of love for Anck @-@ su @-@ namun . He is cursed and slowly killed for his treachery , but is resurrected 3 @,@ 000 years later . South African stage actor Vosloo understood the approach that Sommers was going for in his screenplay , but only agreed to take on the role of Imhotep " if I could do it absolutely straight . From Imhotep 's point of view , this is a skewed version of ' Romeo and Juliet ' . "

John Hannah as Jonathan Carnahan

Evelyn 's bumbling older brother , whose primary goal is to get rich ; he signs on for the trip to Hamunaptra after learning from Evelyn that the city is supposed to be where the ancient pharaohs hid " the wealth of Egypt . " Jonathan is also a thief ; he steals the key needed to open the Book of Amun @-@ Ra from Rick and manages to pickpocket the same key from Imhotep during the film 's climactic battle .

Kevin J. O 'Connor as Beni Gabor

A former soldier in the French Foreign Legion , like Rick . Beni is obsessed with wealth , but also extremely cowardly ; he betrays his employers when faced with Imhotep 's wrath , who takes him as his servant when Beni prays in what Imhotep recognizes as the " language of the slaves " .

Jonathan Hyde as Dr. Allen Chamberlain

An eminent British Egyptologist guiding the American expedition .

Oded Fehr as Ardeth Bay

A Medjai and protector of the city .

Erick Avari as Dr. Terrence Bey

The curator of the museum as well as a Medjai .

Patricia Velásquez as Anck @-@ Su @-@ Namun

A secret lover of Imhotep and the mistress of Pharaoh Seti I. No other man was ever allowed to touch her .

Bernard Fox as Captain Winston Havlock

An ally of Rick as well as the professional pilot and within his service in the Royal Air Force during the first World War .

Omid Djalili as Warden Gad Hassan

A Prison Warden in Cairo Prison who releases Rick from prison after being offered a cut of any treasure Evelyn and Jonathan find at the city of the dead , and accompanies them on the expedition to protect his investment .

Stephen Dunham , Corey Johnson , and Tuc Watkins as Christopher Henderson , David Daniels and Bernard Burns , the three American treasure hunters respectively .

= = Production = =

= = = Origins = = =

In 1992 , producers James Jacks and Sean Daniel decided to update the original Mummy film for the 1990s . Universal Studios gave them the go @-@ ahead , but only if they kept the budget around \$ 10 million . Jacks remembers that the studio " essentially wanted a low @-@ budget horror franchise " ; in response , Jacks and Daniel recruited horror filmmaker / writer Clive Barker on board to direct . Barker 's vision for the film was violent , with the story revolving around the head of a contemporary art museum who turns out to be a cultist trying to reanimate mummies . Jacks recalls that Barker 's take was " dark , sexual and filled with mysticism " , and that , " it would have been a great low @-@ budget movie " . After several meetings , Barker and Universal lost interest and parted company .

Filmmaker George A. Romero was brought in with a vision of a zombie @-@ style horror movie similar to Night of the Living Dead , but which also relied heavily upon elements of tragic romance and ambivalence of identity . Romero completed a draft in October 1994 , cowritten with Alan Ormsby and John Sayles , that revolved around female archaeologist Helen Grover and her discovery in Abydos of the tomb of Imhotep , an Egyptian general who lived in the time of Ramesses II . Unfolding in a nameless American city in modern times , events are set into motion when Imhotep inadvertently awakens as a result of his preserved cadaver having been exposed to rays from an MRI scan in a high @-@ tech forensic archaeology lab . The script then progresses to a fish @-@ out @-@ of @-@ water story when Imhotep , having regained his youthful appearance , recognizes the need to adapt to a contemporary society that is three thousand years removed from the one he came from . Assuming at first that he is a representative from the Bureau of Antiquities , Helen finds herself drawn into a tentative relationship with Imhotep while also experiencing clairvoyant flashbacks to a previous life in Nineteenth Dynasty Egypt as a priestess of Isis . Summoning mystical powers through incantation , Imhotep later resurrects the mummy of Karis , a loyal slave whose body had been resting alongside his master 's in the same tomb but is now held in the local museum . After escaping into the city sewer system , Karis embarks on a vengeful rampage against the various criminal fences and high society antiquarians who had acquired stolen relics from his tomb . Romero 's script was considered too dark and violent by Jacks and the studio , who wanted a more accessible picture . Compounding the issue was the fact that Romero was unable to extricate from a contract for a different film project he had in negotiation at the time with MGM , and so his involvement with the film was severed and the development of an entirely new script was commissioned to other writers .

Joe Dante was the next choice , increasing the budget for his idea of Daniel Day @-@ Lewis as a brooding Mummy . This version (co @-@ written by John Sayles) was set in contemporary times and focused on reincarnation with elements of a love story . It came close to being made with some elements , like the flesh @-@ eating scarabs , making it to the final product . However , at that point , the studio wanted a film with a budget of \$ 15 million and rejected Dante 's version . Soon after , Mick Garris was attached to direct but eventually left the project , and Wes Craven was offered the film but turned it down . Then , Stephen Sommers called Jacks and Daniel in 1997 with his vision of The Mummy " as a kind of Indiana Jones or Jason and the Argonauts with the mummy as the creature giving the hero a hard time " . Sommers had seen the original film when he was eight , and wanted to recreate the things he liked about it on a bigger scale . He had wanted to make a Mummy film since 1993 , but other writers or directors were always attached . Finally , Sommers received his

window of opportunity and pitched his idea to Universal with an 18 @-@ page treatment . At the time , Universal 's management had changed in response to the box office failure of Babe : Pig in the City , and the loss led the studio to want to revisit its successful franchises from the 1930s . Universal liked this idea so much that they approved the concept and increased the budget from \$ 15 million to \$ 80 million .

= = = Principal photography = = =

Filming began in Marrakech , Morocco on May 4 , 1998 and lasted 17 weeks . Photography then moved to the Sahara desert outside the small town of Erfoud , and then to the United Kingdom before completion of shooting on August 29 , 1998 . The crew could not shoot in Egypt because of the unstable political conditions . To avoid dehydration in the scorching heat of the Sahara , the production 's medical team created a drink that the cast and crew had to consume every two hours . Sandstorms were daily inconveniences . Snakes , spiders and scorpions were a major problem , with many crew members having to be airlifted out after being bitten .

Brendan Fraser nearly died during a scene where his character is hanged . Weisz remembered , " He [Fraser] stopped breathing and had to be resuscitated . " The production had the official support of the Moroccan army , and the cast members had kidnapping insurance taken out on them , a fact Sommers disclosed to the cast only after shooting had finished .

Production Designer Allan Cameron found a dormant volcano near Erfoud where the entire set for Hamunaptra could be constructed . Sommers liked the location because , " A city hidden in the crater of an extinct volcano made perfect sense . Out in the middle of the desert you would never see it . You would never think of entering the crater unless you knew what was inside that volcano . " A survey of the volcano was conducted so that an accurate model and scale models of the columns and statues could be replicated back at Shepperton Studios , where all of the scenes involving the underground passageways of the City of the Dead were shot . These sets took 16 weeks to build , and included fiberglass columns rigged with special effects for the movie 's final scenes . Another large set was constructed in the United Kingdom on the dockyard at Chatham which doubled for the Giza Port on the River Nile . This set was 600 feet (183 m) in length and featured " a steam train , an Ajax traction engine , three cranes , an open two @-@ horse carriage , four horse @-@ drawn carts , five dressing horses and grooms , nine pack donkeys and mules , as well as market stalls , Arab @-@ clad vendors and room for 300 costumed extras " .

= = = Special effects = = =

The filmmakers reportedly spent \$ 15 million of the \$ 80 million budget on special effects , provided by Industrial Light & Magic ; the producers wanted a new look for the Mummy so that they would avoid comparisons to past movies . John Andrew Berton , Jr . , Industrial Light & Magic 's Visual Effects Supervisor on The Mummy , started developing the look three months before filming started . He said that he wanted the Mummy " to be mean , tough , nasty , something that had never been seen by audiences before " . Berton used motion capture in order to achieve " a menacing and very realistic Mummy " . Specific photography was conducted on actor Arnold Vosloo so that the special effects crew could see exactly how he moved and replicate it .

To create the Mummy , Berton used a combination of live action and computer graphics . Then , he matched the digital prosthetic make @-@ up pieces on Vosloo 's face during filming . Berton said , " When you see his film image , that 's him . When he turns his head and half of his face is missing and you can see right through on to his teeth , that 's really his face . And that 's why it was so hard to do . " Vosloo described the filming as a " whole new thing " for him ; " They had to put these little red tracking lights all over my face so they could map in the special effects . A lot of the time I was walking around the set looking like a Christmas tree . " Make @-@ Up Effects Supervisor Nick Dudman produced the physical creature effects in the film , including three @-@ dimensional make @-@ up and prosthetics . He also designed all of the animatronic effects . While the film made extensive use of computer generated imagery , many scenes , including ones where Rachel Weisz

's character is covered with rats and locusts , were real , using live animals .

= = Soundtrack = =

The Mummy : Original Motion Picture Soundtrack was composed and conducted by Jerry Goldsmith , with orchestrations provided by Alexander Courage . The soundtrack was released by Decca Records on May 4 , 1999 . Like many Goldsmith scores , the main theme uses extensive brass and percussion elements ; Goldsmith also used sparing amounts of vocals , highly unusual for most of his work .

Overall , Goldsmith 's score was well received . AllMusic described it as a " grand , melodramatic score " which delivered the expected highlights . Other reviews positively noted the dark , percussive sound meshed well with the plot , as well as the raw power of the music . The limited but masterful use of the chorus was also lauded , and most critics found the final track on the CD to be the best overall . On the other hand , some critics found the score lacked cohesion , and that the constant heavy action lent itself to annoying repetition . Roderick Scott off CineMusic.net summed up the score as " representative of both Goldsmith 's absolute best and his most mediocre . Thankfully [...] his favourable work on this release wins out . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Box office = = =

The Mummy opened on May 7 , 1999 , and grossed \$ 43 million in 3 @, @ 210 theaters in the United States on its opening weekend . The film went on to gross \$ 415 million worldwide (Domestic : \$ 155 million ; Foreign : \$ 260 million) .

= = = Critical reaction = = =

The Mummy received mixed reviews from critics . On Rotten Tomatoes the film holds a 55 % rating , based on 83 reviews , with an average rating of 5 @. @ 7 / 10 . The site 's critical consensus reads , " It 's difficult to make a persuasive argument for The Mummy as any kind of meaningful cinematic achievement , but it 's undeniably fun to watch . " On Metacritic the film has a score of 48 out of 100 , based on 34 critics , indicating " mixed or average reviews " .

Roger Ebert , of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times , gave the film 3 out of 4 stars , writing " There is hardly a thing I can say in its favor , except that I was cheered by nearly every minute of it . I cannot argue for the script , the direction , the acting or even the mummy , but I can say that I was not bored and sometimes I was unreasonably pleased . " Likewise , Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly gave the film a " B ? " grade and said , " The Mummy would like to make you shudder , but it tries to do so without ever letting go of its jocular inconsequentiality . " Bob Graham of the San Francisco Chronicle gave the film high marks for the acting as well as the special effects .

Stephen Holden from The New York Times wrote , " This version of The Mummy has no pretenses to be anything other than a gaudy comic video game splashed onto the screen . Think Raiders of the Lost Ark with cartoon characters , no coherent story line and lavish but cheesy special effects . Think Night of the Living Dead stripped of genuine horror and restaged as an Egyptian @-@ theme Halloween pageant . Think Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy grafted onto a Bing Crosby @-@ Bob Hope road picture (The Road to Hamunaptra ?) and pumped up into an epic @-@ size genre spoof . " Publications like The Austin Chronicle and Dallas Observer came to the conclusion that despite good acting and special effects , the movie lacked cohesion ; talking about the special effects , the Observer lamented " If only generating a soul for the film itself were so easy . " Other publications such as Jump Cut felt that Industrial Light and Magic 's lock on special effects proved detrimental to The Mummy ; " The mummy " , Ernest Larson wrote for the Jump Cut , " is standard @-@ issue I.L. & M. " . Kim Newman of the British Film Institute judged the picture inferior to the

original , as all the time was spent on special effects , instead of creating the atmosphere which made the original film such a classic . USA Today gave the film two out of four stars and felt that it was " not free of stereotypes " , a sentiment with which the BFI concurred . " If someone complains of a foul odor , you can be sure an Arab stooge is about to enter a scene . Fraser , equally quick with weapon , fist or quip , may save the day , but even he can 't save the picture " , USA Today wrote .

= = = Accolades = = =

= = Adaptations = =

The Mummy 's box office performance led to numerous sequels and spinoffs . In 2001 , the sequel The Mummy Returns was released ; the film features most of the surviving principal characters , as a married Rick and Evelyn confront Imhotep and the Scorpion King . The film also introduced the heroes ' son , Alex . The two films inspired both an animated series which lasted two seasons , and a spin @-@ off prequel , The Scorpion King (2002) , telling the story of the Akkadian warrior as he was crowned king .

A second sequel , called The Mummy : Tomb of the Dragon Emperor , was released on August 1 , 2008 . The story takes place in China with the Terracotta Emperor inspiring the villain , while Rachel Weisz was replaced with Maria Bello . A prequel to The Scorpion King , The Scorpion King 2 : Rise of a Warrior , was released direct @-@ to @-@ DVD . Both films were poorly received by critics .

Two video game adaptations of The Mummy were published by Konami and Universal Interactive in 2000 : an Action Adventure for the PlayStation and PC developed by Rebellion Developments , as well as a Game Boy Color puzzle game developed by Konami Nagoya . The film also inspired a roller coaster , Revenge of the Mummy in three Universal Studios Theme Parks : Hollywood , California ; Orlando , Florida ; and Sentosa , Singapore . On April 4 , 2012 , Universal announced their plans to reboot the franchise .