

Mummy removed from exhibition over 'lack of consent'

26th October 2026



A museum in Scotland has removed the remains of an ancient Egyptian mummy from an exhibition because there is no documented evidence that the deceased gave consent for their remains to be displayed. Glasgow's

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum took away the remains of a priest named Nakht, a mummified male head, and other body parts. In place of the exhibits, visitors found signs explaining that the remains had been removed "as a mark of respect". The museum said the decision "reflects contemporary museum practice". It added: "In the absence of consent, we believe removing ancient Egyptian human remains from display is more respectful to the deceased individuals."

The decision has provoked widespread criticism. Scottish politician Murdo Fraser called the move "woke madness". He argued that museums should showcase history rather than hide it. A museum visitor complained that his daughter was upset at not being able to see the exhibits. An education campaigner said the decision "represents the triumph of educational stupidity and ignorance". He added: "It is not possible to seek permission from those who died thousands of years ago." However, the museum defended its action. It cited the International Council of Museums' Code of Ethics, which says museums "should uphold the inherent dignity of human remains".

Sources: ancient-origins.net / yahoo.com / newsweek.com

Writing

It is wrong to display human remains in museums. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

museum / remains / mummy / exhibition / consent / priest / visitors / decision / criticism / woke / madness / history / stupidity / ignorance / permission / dignity

True / False

- 1) A museum removed a mummy because it did not have ID papers. T / F
- 2) The exhibits at the museum included body parts of an Egyptian king. T / F
- 3) There was no indication on display cases as to why they were empty. T / F
- 4) The museum said it was not so respectful to display human remains. T / F
- 5) A politician said the issue of consent was madness. T / F
- 6) The politician said museums should not hide history. T / F
- 7) The politician said we should look for signed consent from the deceased. T / F
- 8) The museum cited a code of ethics from world museums. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. removed | a. given rise to |
| 2. remains | b. proof |
| 3. evidence | c. lack |
| 4. mark | d. quoted |
| 5. absence | e. taken away |
| 6. provoked | f. victory |
| 7. madness | g. body parts |
| 8. triumph | h. sign |
| 9. cited | i. preserve |
| 10. uphold | j. stupidity |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about mummies?
- c) What is your favourite museum?
- d) What do you know about the modern meaning of the word 'woke'?
- e) Does the decision represent 'the triumph of educational stupidity'?
- f) How can we "uphold the inherent dignity of human remains"?
- g) What exhibition would you really like to see?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the museum?

Phrase Match

1. there is no documented
 2. a mummified
 3. a mark of
 4. the absence
 5. more respectful to the deceased
 6. The decision has provoked widespread
 7. museums should showcase history
 8. his daughter
 9. stupidity
 10. the museum defended
- a. respect
 - b. was upset
 - c. its action
 - d. individuals
 - e. evidence
 - f. and ignorance
 - g. of consent
 - h. criticism
 - i. male head
 - j. rather than hide it

Discussion – Student B

- a) How interested are you in mummies?
- b) What are your favourite kinds of museums?
- c) Is it disrespectful to display ancient human remains?
- d) How would you feel if parts of your ancestors were put on display?
- e) How can museums display human remains more respectfully?
- f) When was the last time you went to a museum?
- g) Would you like to see ancient Egyptian mummies?
- h) Are online or physical museums best?

Spelling

1. an cnetnai Egyptian mummy
2. the remains of a speirt named Nakht
3. In place of the bsiehitx
4. optyoearrmnc museum practice
5. In the bnaeecs of consent
6. more respectful to the dseeedac individuals
7. krveopod widespread criticism
8. the decision represents the upmihrt
9. educational stupidity and neigocarn
10. seek nrsimpsoei
11. code of tsiech
12. the inherent iydtnig of human remains

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. g	3. b	4. h	5. c
6. a	7. j	8. f	9. d	10. i

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What did a museum say ancient dead people had not given?
2.	Who were the remains from?
3.	What did signs in the museum say removing the exhibits was a mark of?
4.	What did the museum say its decision reflected?
5.	Who did the museum say removing the remains was respectful to?
6.	What has the museum's decision provoked?
7.	What did a politician call the decision to not display the remains?
8.	What did the politician say museums should do to history?
9.	What did an education campaigner say the decision was a triumph of?
10.	Who did the campaigner say it was impossible to get permission from?

Speaking – Museum Exhibits

Rank these with your partner. Put the best exhibits at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Mummies
- Fashion
- Dinosaurs
- Food
- Movie memorabilia
- J-Pop history
- The English language
- Earth's future

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	T	7	F	8	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.