Unravelling the Mystery Behind Mummies

Finding out the details underneath the bandages of the mummies from the Milwaukee Public Museum is what Carter Lupton, PhD, Curator of Ancient History, Department Head at the museum, hopes to do thanks to the most advanced CT technology by GE Healthcare, the Discovery* CT750 HD. Three of the mummies from the museum collection were scanned in April, 2011 to find out more information about their gender, age and causes of their death.

In collaboration with GE Healthcare, researchers from the Milwaukee Public Museum used the latest GE CT imaging technology to look back through time and start unraveling details about how three mummies—two from ancient Egypt and one from Peru—lived and died.

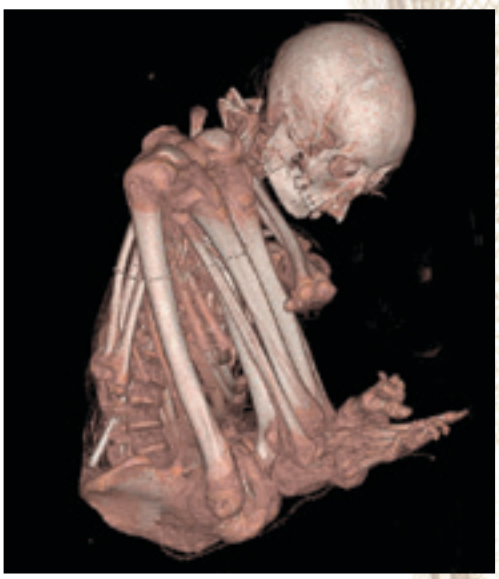
This isn't the first time the anthropologists have turned to GE Healthcare for assistance, and as GE's CT imaging technology has improved, so too has their knowledge of the mummies' history. One of the Egyptian mummies, named Djed-Hor, was first scanned in 1986.

Then again in 2006, another scan using better technology revealed a silver dollar-sized hole in his skull, leading the anthropologists to conclude he had undergone a primitive form of brain surgery.

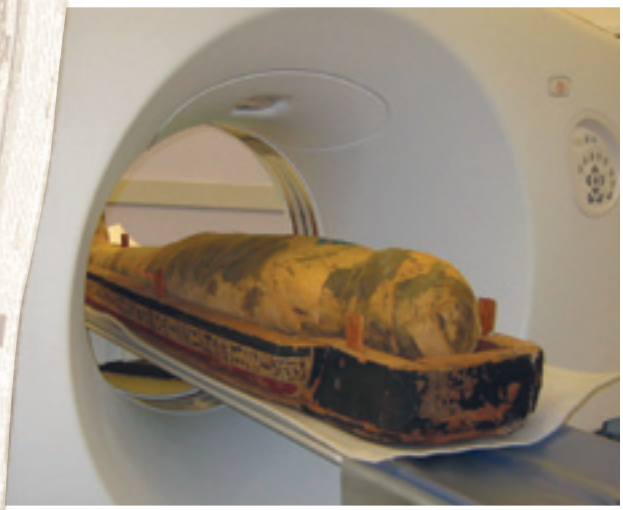
To best help the museum unravel the mummy mystery, GE Healthcare provided a cutting-edge Discovery CT750 HD along with Gemstone* Spectral Imaging (GSI), which offered high quality images and a dramatic level of detail. GSI also allows researchers to distinguish one type of tissue from another in order to better understand the makeup of the mummies' bodies and other material.

Dr. Lupton and his research team used the high resolution images from the CT scanner to learn more about ancient medical skills and knowledge, as well as create 3D holographic representations of what the mummies would have looked like when they were alive.

"We've been doing this for 25 years with GE. Every time we've come out, it's a different generation of technology, better imaging, better information, better ways, and it's faster too," Dr. Lupton added. ■



CT scan of a Peruvian mummy.



An ancient Egyptian mummy is scanned.