The Speaker

Professor Smith's research centers on the civilizations of ancient Egypt and Nubia. He is particularly interested in the identification of ethnicity in the archaeological record and the ethnic dynamics of colonial encounters. He is an active field archaeologist, having participated in and led archeological expeditions to Egypt, including the Luxor's Theban Necropolis, and since 1997 to Sudanese Nubia, where he directs two projects. In 1993, Professor Smith took a break from the academic world and became the Egyptological Consultant on the hit MGM movie 'Stargate,' giving advice on the script, sets and costumes, and recreating spoken ancient Egyptian for about half the movie's dialog. He renewed his Hollywood connection in 1998 by consulting on the script and reconstructing spoken ancient Egyptian for another hit movie, the recent Universal remake of 'The Mummy,' continuing this work in 2000 with the sequel 'The Mummy Returns.'
Unwrapping The Mummy: Hollywood Fantasies, Egyptian Realities

Stuart Tyson Smith
Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology
Co-Convener, Archaeology Research Focus Group

The ancient Egyptians spent a great deal of time and effort preparing for the Afterlife, making mummies and providing them with the equipment that would allow them to live forever. Mummies have been a source of fascination for centuries - witness most recently the success of Universal's remake of "The Mummy." So what makes a mummy? What was the most important funerary equipment for a successful afterlife? Just how much did immortality cost an average or above average ancient Egyptian? Drawing upon his own work for "The Mummy", and archaeology at Luxor’s Theban Necropolis and in Sudanese Nubia, Professor Smith will explore some modern myths and the fascinating insights we can gain from mummies and their equipment.

Thursday, May 16, 2013
5:00 - 6:30 PM
University Club • 1332 Santa Barbara Street

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