Twist of fate leads to new finds in Tutankhamun's tomb

Firm behind the high-resolution images that led to the discovery was “moved on” from another important pharaonic burial site

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A team will finally begin to fully document the tomb of Seti I this month

but we were moved on because [the antiquities minister at the time, Zahi Hawass was excavating in the tunnel of Seti I]. Lowe says, "Seti I's tomb is the one that everyone believes contains hidden rooms that have yet to be discovered because none of the pharaoh's major funerary objectsso has surfaced."

This month, Lowe and his team will finally return to finish their work on Seti I's tomb, which Lowe describes as the "largest and most important in the Valley of the Kings," as its decoration and architecture are considered to represent the height of New Kingdom tomb art. The project to fully document the site is part of a larger plan called the Theban Necropolis Preservation Initiative, a collaboration with Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, to train Egyptians in three-dimensional scanning techniques.

Factum Arte will be working with the University of Basel on Seti I's richly decorated tomb. It was considered to be one of the best-preserved tombs when it was discovered by Giovanni Battista Belzoni in 1817. The Italian crossed the first fatum of the tomb, which also unfortunately damaged some of the wall paintings. Further damage was caused by the removal of architectural elements, including a pair of doorjambs, which are now in the collections of the Louvre in Paris and Florence's Museo Archeologico.

"We'd like to increase our understanding of the [known elements] in the tomb, but we also hope to reveal other aspects that have perhaps remained hidden," Lowe says. He adds that it is worth remembering that the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb was one of the best-documented of any Egyptian tomb, and yet nearly a century later, and only with the help of advanced technology, are we closer to learning the truth about the tomb.

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*For more on Tutankhamun, see p4*