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Dinosaurs Arrive At Royal Ontario Museum

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), in collaboration with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), today unveiled a new dramatic display featuring two skeleton casts from the ROM's internationally renowned collection of dinosaurs. Until 2012, international passengers arriving at Pearson International Airport's Terminal 1 will be welcomed in an exciting way.

Dinosaurs

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A Scene from the Late Jurassic captures a moment of 150 million years ago: a small herbivore, Othnielia, has tripped to the ground as the large predator Allosaurus bears down.

ROM Director & CEO William Thorsell commented, "It's wonderful that, on arrival in Toronto via its world class airport, international travelers will be vividly reminded to visit one the world's great museums. The ROM is proud to work with the GTAA in this significant endeavour."

"A Scene from the Late Jurassic at Pearson International Airport will help entice more visitors to the ROM and Ontario's other world-class cultural attractions that play a key role in the province's tourism economy," said Culture Minister Aileen Carroll.

About the Installation

Othnielia rex, a small, agile, plant-eating dinosaur fed on low-growing vegetation, which it cropped with its turtle-like beak and then chopped with chisel-shaped cheek teeth. Othnielia walked on its hind legs, and used its stiff tail for balance. Unlike other herbivores, Othnielia lacked defenses such as bony spikes or plates, and it likely relied upon speed and agility to escape predators such as Allosaurus.

Allosaurus was the most common large meat-eating dinosaur in the Late Jurassic period. It grew to 11 metres (36 feet) in length, and weighed up to 3 tonnes. Allosaurus was a formidable predator, possessing powerful legs for swift pursuit. Its front limbs were equipped with large claws for grasping prey and its powerful jaws were trimmed with dozens of serrated teeth for tearing flesh.

The scene takes place against a backdrop of fossil-rich sedimentary rocks of the Morrison Formation. The sediments that formed the rocks were deposited on a vast lowland plain in a seasonally dry environment rich in dinosaur life. Morrison rocks, and the fossils they contain, are exposed widely throughout the western United States, from New Mexico to Montana. The Morrison fauna is best known for the giant plant-eating sauropods such as Apatosaurus and Barosaurus, but also includes the well-known plated dinosaur Stegosaurus, and the horned carnivore Ceratosaurus. Fossil remains of plants, fishes, frogs, salamanders, crocodilians, lizards, pterosaurs, turtles, and even small mammals provide a detailed picture of the environment in

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which the dinosaurs lived.

The display was conceived and overseen by Dr. David Evans, Associate Curator of Vertebrate Palaeontology in the ROM's Natural History department and was constructed by the craftsmen of Research Casting International (RCI), one of the world's largest providers of museum technical services. RCI recently mounted the first fossil Barosaurus skeleton, the 27-metre (90-foot) centrepiece of the James and Louise Temerty Galleries of the Age of Dinosaurs in the ROM's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. The Barosaurus is the largest dinosaur on permanent display in Canada and one of only two Barosaurus skeletons on display in the world.

Launched in April 2004, the GTAA Exhibition Program offers a wide range of engaging exhibits, showcasing Canadian art and culture from museums, galleries, institutions and private collections in Ontario and Canada. With the objective of promoting Canada's reputation as a significant international cultural destination, GTAA creates an enhanced environment for the over 28 million visitors passing through Toronto Pearson Airport each year. Designed and produced by the ROM, the program features the story of natural history and world culture. -- www.rom.on.ca



Posted August 29th, 2008 by ruzik\_tuzik

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