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Union Station To Bring World-Renowned *BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life* To Kansas City For The First Time

*Exhibition to offer rare 3-dimensional journey into the form,
function and beauty of the human body through all stages of life*

KANSAS CITY, MO. (April 26, 2016) — Starting May 21st, visitors to Kansas City’s Union Station will have the unique opportunity to take a look inside themselves like never before when *Gunther von Hagens’ BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life* opens to the public.

The Cycle of Life exhibition comes from the renowned *BODY WORLDS* collection, the most visited exhibitions in the world and experienced by more than 40 million visitors across four continents. Never before seen in Kansas City, *BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life* is expected to attract a large and diverse local and regional audience including families, students, health-minded individuals, healthcare advocates and professionals, and anyone interested in learning what makes us human.

The Cycle of Life is a new, groundbreaking anatomical presentation by *BODY WORLDS* that focuses on the human life cycle. It presents the body as it grows, changes, matures and wanes. Every stage of development is documented, from conception thru optimal adult health and athleticism to eventual decline. The exhibition delivers a breathtaking encounter with the inner workings of the human body and shows the effects of poor health, good health, and lifestyle choices.

“Union Station is committed to bringing science education to the community and that’s exactly what this world-class exhibition does,” George Guastello, president and CEO of Union Station, said. “With great purpose, we searched out the world’s leading educational resource. *BODY WORLDS* does a brilliant, beautiful and impactful job of delivering enriching content. And, they do it with the greatest respect for all involved. Visitors to *BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life* will be profoundly informed and motivated to consider the health of their bodies in life-changing ways.”

In addition to showcasing the wonders of human development, the 100+ preserved human specimens – including 14 whole-body plastinates -- demonstrate the complexity, resilience and vulnerability of the human body in distress, disease and optimal health.

All specimens presented are preserved through Plastination, an advanced scientific technique invented by pioneering anatomist Dr. Gunther von Hagens which allows specimens to be preserved indefinitely for educational purposes in teaching institutions as well as exhibitions.

In the exhibition, designed by *BODY WORLDS'* creative and conceptual designer, Dr. Angelina Whalley, visitors will follow the human body through the span of time and learn about the latest findings in anatomy, longevity and health.

Within the exhibition, topics include:

- “The Artists’ Gaze”, an exploration of the sight and visions of artists Claude Monet and Edgar Degas, who suffered from cataracts and retinal eye disease.
- “Centennial Village”, a feature on the findings on geographic clusters around the world where the longest living people reside—from Okinawa, Japan and Ovodda in Sardinia to the Hunza region of Pakistan.
- “A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius”, a stunning look at conception and prenatal development. This area features a multimedia display on cell division and a remarkable collection of plastinated fetuses acquired from historical anatomical collections.
- “Under Pressure” (blood pressure and hypertension)
- “The Mathematics of Life” (heartbeats)
- “You Are What You Eat” (diet)
- And much, much more . . .

“We anticipate this remarkable experience to teach visitors how truly magnificent our bodies are,” Bob Regnier, Board Chairman of Union Station, said. “Eyes will be opened regarding the impact our own personal decisions have on our health. Seeing the intricacy, fragility and sheer elegance of our physical bodies will undoubtedly translate into healthier choices and prolonged optimal health. This all aligns perfectly with one of our key focus areas in Science City . . . human health.”

Kansas City -- and every community across the US -- is confronted with the importance of human health like never before. The gap between what’s possible and what’s currently realized as it relates to healthy choices and outcomes is large. Against that backdrop, Union Station proudly presents this important topic and exhibition.

BODY WORLDS & The Cycle of Life opens to the public on Saturday, May 21st. Operating hours are Monday – Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Friday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and

Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ticket prices range from \$14 to \$21.95 for General Admission and \$24.95 for a VIP Anytime Voucher. Special pricing is also available for Group visits.

Tickets are available for purchase at the Union Station Box Office and online at unionstation.org/cycleoflife. This is a limited engagement. Make plans now to experience the sheer elegance and intricacy that makes us human.

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About Union Station Kansas City, Inc.

Union Station Kansas City -- a 501(c)3 non-profit organization -- is a 100-year-old historical landmark and celebrated civic asset renovated and reopened to the public in 1999. The organization -- dedicated to science education, celebration of community and preservation of history -- is home to Kansas City's Science Center (internationally awarded in 2015 by ASTC for overall visitor experience); the popular Model Railroad Experience; the Arvin Gottlieb Planetarium; the Regnier Extreme Screen Theatre, H&R Block City Stage featuring live theater, and a selection of unique shops and restaurants. Union Station is also home to prominent area civic organizations and businesses, and regularly hosts world-class traveling exhibitions. Awarded "Top Banquet Facilities in KC" by KC Business Journal, the facility regularly hosts community events and private celebrations of all sizes. Visit www.unionstation.org for details. Also, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#)

About *BODY WORLDS*

Invented by Dr. Gunther von Hagens in 1977, the Plastination process replaces the natural fluids in the specimen with liquid reactive plastics that are hardened and cured with gas, light, or heat. Before hardening the plastic in the specimens, the plastinates are fixed into extraordinary, lifelike poses, illustrating how our bodies internally respond to everyday movements and activities. Plastination provides the flexibility and strength needed to display and preserve the specimens in their true-to-life form, without the use of glass barriers or formaldehyde. Dr. von Hagens' *BODY WORLDS* exhibitions stem from an established body donation program that relies on donor consent. The specimens on display, excluding a small number of acquisitions from anatomical collections and anatomy programs, stem from a body donation program that was begun in 1983 by Dr. von Hagens.

ADDITIONAL QUOTES:

Dr. Barth Wright - Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – Department of Anatomy

“The opportunity to view the details of human anatomy in action is one that should not be missed. As a trained anatomist, the intricacy and beauty of the human body can often be lost in our forms of presentation, as in lecture or in the lab. The *Body Worlds* exhibit permits one to not only view anatomical complexity, but also see these wonderful “machines” in static action. In this way the remarkable form of the specimens is coupled with function in a way that impacts viewers much the way art does. We are able to see how we are part of the living world by observing how the human body differs only in the size and shape of its parts from other mammals. Ultimately, seeing the exhibit helps us to reflect on our own bodies and how we must pay attention to and care for them.”

more

Wayne Carter - President and CEO, KC Area Life Sciences

“The human body is a beautiful expression of the complexity and fragility of life. Better understanding our bodies and how we can keep them healthy will contribute to reaching our full potential. The *Body Worlds, Cycle of Life* exhibit will help us understand how the life sciences are impacting health care and how we can better care for this amazing machine, the human body.”

Scott Hall - Vice President of Strategic Initiatives for the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

“Education is key on the journey to health, a journey the KC Chamber is taking with our regional Healthy KC initiative. Our congratulations to Union Station on what promises to be another fascinating special exhibit, this time focusing on health and wellness.”

Excerpts from *L’Osservatore Romano*, Vatican newspaper

“... the exhibition is a wonderful hymn for the respect of the body ... the result of the exhibit is not only to bring science to the layman, but to encourage each of us to really take care of ourselves ... to be thankful for the wonderful luggage with which we are born and to also assume the responsibility to respect it ... realizing what we have inside us and the incessant work of our inner gearbox leaves us with a sense of admiring awe.”

