



## ITALY UNEARTHES 2,000-YEAR-OLD 'TOMB OF CERBERUS' WITH FRESCO OF THREE-HEADED DOG



 A recently-discovered frescoe depicting the Ancient greek creature Cerberus

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In Italy, a 2,000-year-old sealed tomb containing an artwork depicting the three-headed dog from Ancient Greek mythology, Cerberus, was discovered.

The burial chamber was found by the archaeologists in Giugliano, a suburb of Naples. It is thought to be approximately 2,000 years old.

It was found on a farm during an archaeological survey conducted before to the initiation of water system repair work in the city.

Previously, a large number of burial sites were found by archaeologists in the same area that likely date from the Roman Republic era (510-31 BC) to the Roman Imperial Age (31 BC – AD 476).



The undiscovered tomb features various frescoes, which are present on its walls and ceilings in largely pristine condition.



*An exterior shot of the recently-discovered chamber tomb near Naples – Credit: EBU*

To enter the burial chamber, tiles covering the ceiling opening had to be removed by the archaeologists carefully, which led them to an ‘unprecedented’ discovery.

“The tomb has frescoed ceilings and walls in perfect condition, with mythological scenes that go all around the room and figurative representations among which, a three-headed dog stands out,” stated Mariano Nuzzo, the superintendent of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the Naples metropolitan area.

“Three painted klînai, an altar with vessels for libations, the deceased still placed on the funeral beds with rich objects – complete the picture of a discovery which, in this area, is unprecedented,” he added.

There has been continuous work to excavate more of the tomb without damaging its interiors.

“The emotion aroused by the privilege of such a discovery is indescribable. The territory of Giugliano, after years of oblivion, is finally returning significant vestiges of its glorious past, to be preserved and protected, thanks to a common effort,” Nuzzo added.

In the various frescoes, the most notable mythological figure drawn is that of the three-headed dog, believed to guard the gates of the underworld. Because of this, the burial chamber was named the ‘Tomb of Cerberus’.

The striking artwork depicts the 12th and most dangerous phase of Hercules’ labors, during which he was led by Mercury to Hades in order to apprehend Cerberus, the three-headed monster dog.

Other mythological creatures depicted in the frescoes included ichthyocentaurs, a form of sea god resembling centaurs that had a human upper body, a fish tail, a human lower anterior half, and horse-like forelegs.

The burial chamber was found by the researchers when they saw a wall that was constructed using opus incertum, an opus in ancient Roman construction method.

Full excavation of the chamber tomb is currently in progress, and archaeologists intend to explore the broader necropolis surrounding the tomb too.

SOURCE: INDEPENDENT PRESS AND NEWS AGENCIES