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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LASM Releases LASM 360, A Fully Immersive Virtual Experience

BATON ROUGE, LA – LASM has released LASM 360, a fully immersive virtual experience accessible by computer, smartphone, tablet, and Virtual Reality headset. Hosted at virtual-lasm.org/lasm-360, this free-access digital museum and planetarium experience is the first of its kind and provides educational, entertaining opportunities for all, regardless of health, geographic location, or socioeconomic status.

“LASM 360 is our creative solution to a significant problem,” states Serena Pandos, LASM President & Executive Director. “Many people are not currently able to visit LASM in-person for myriad reasons. Whether you’re quarantined or isolated, working late and unable to visit during our public access hours, cannot afford admission, or just want to visit LASM from the comfort of your own home, you can access your museum 24/7 with LASM 360.”

Virtual LASM visitors can explore LASM’s 75,000 square foot building, tour the galleries and view objects in stunning high-resolution detail, read or listen to narrated exhibition text, meet the authentic ancient Egyptian mummy in the Ancient Egypt Gallery, watch a full-dome show in the state-of-the-art Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, engage in programming in the Adalié Brent Auditorium, and more. LASM 360 is also being used as a component of live, presenter-led Virtual Voyage field trips for K-12 students.

“We have continued to meet unprecedented challenge with unprecedented innovation,” Pandos explains. “The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the most difficult time in LASM’s history, but our extremely dedicated and passionate staff has continued to engage our community, constantly pivoting to best serve our diverse audience. Jay Lamm, Planetarium Producer & Technical Manager, spearheaded the LASM 360 project and used his technological and photography expertise to develop this exciting new program in record time in conjunction with our Education, Curatorial, Communications, and Operations departments.”

“Thanks to generous sponsorship provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, Healthy Blue Louisiana, AT&T, Louisiana Lottery Corporation, and BASF, we have been able to create this program along with our digital learning platform hosted at www.virtual-lasm.org,” Pandos

continues. "Like many nonprofits, the LASM continues to experience severe financial challenges as a result of government restrictions, but our staff is working tirelessly to continue serving our community with free-access programs. To help keep the good momentum going, and to keep our programs available despite pandemic mandates, we invite you to visit LASM 360 at www.virtual-lasm.org/lasm-360 and make a tax-deductible charitable donation to support these efforts."

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Image: This authentic, Ptolemaic-era ancient Egyptian mummy is housed in LASM's Ancient Egypt Gallery, which can be accessed virtually at virtual-lasm.org/lasm-360.

About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum

Housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in a historic railway station in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum believes that art and science shape each other, our lives, and the world. The Museum is currently open for modified operating hours: Thursdays & Fridays from 9:30 AM – 2 PM and Saturdays from 9:30 AM – 5 PM. Active duty military members, first responders, and their families receive free admission with ID as part of the Blue Star Museums program, sponsored by Special Risk Insurance, Inc. VFIS of Mississippi/Louisiana.

The Museum, founded in 1962, is home to the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, the largest and most advanced planetarium in Louisiana and one of the largest in the southeastern United States; a permanent collection including over 4,000 objects; one of the only permanent ancient Egypt galleries in the southeastern United States, housing an authentic, Ptolemaic-era mummy; and displays changing art exhibitions of local and international acclaim. Access to the Museum's digital learning platform for at-home art and science experiences is available at **virtual-lasm.org**.

A 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Museum relies on the support of donations to operate; support the Museum's COVID-19 relief fund at **lasmm.org**. Stay in touch at **lasmm.org** and on social media!