WNET Contact:

Donna Williams, 212.560.8030, [WilliamsD@wnet.org](mailto:WilliamsD@wnet.org)

Press Materials: [http://pbs.org/pressroom](http://www.pbs.org/pressroom) or [http://thirteen.org/pressroom](http://www.thirteen.org/pressroom)

***Secrets of the Dead*** episodes online at [pbs.org/secrets](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/)

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**THIRTEEN’s *Secrets of the Dead* Reveals**

**the Untold Story of *Nero’s Sunken City***

**Wednesday, March 29, 10 p.m.on PBS**

Beneath the turquoise waves of the Bay of Naples lies an extraordinary underwater archeology site, the ancient Roman city of Baiae. From the first century to the third century AD, Baiae was the exclusive playground for the rich and powerful among Rome’s elite. What made Baiae such a special place? What really went on there? And why did it disappear?

For the first time, an international team of scientists, archaeologists, and historians is meticulously mapping the underwater ruins and piecing together evidence that could provide answers to these questions. ***Secrets of the Dead*** chronicles this investigation uncovering what life was like in ***Nero’s Sunken City***. The program airs nationally Wednesday, March 29, 10 p.m. ET on PBS. (Check local listings.)

While some of Baiae’s ruins remain intact on land, more than half of this coastal city is submerged under water. These underwater ruins are three times the size of those in Pompeii. Archaeologists have found a network of roads, miles of brick walls and villas with rich marble floors, and splendid mosaics. But what they haven’t found are any identifiable public buildings, no forum, temple or market place.

The remains consist of one vast luxury villa after another – a Roman Beverly Hills – with elaborate spas and water features, marble statues inspired by Greek art, ponds for farming fish, and more. The villas were like mini-cities. No expense was spared to create these seaside vacation homes where barges floating in the bay were the site of raucous parties.

“Some of the greatest names of the Roman republic…Caesar, Cicero, Mark Anthony, Nero, all of these men had villas at Baiae,” says Professor Kevin Dicus, who has spent the last decade excavating Roman remains around the Bay of Naples. “This was where aristocrats could come and shed their public persona and pursue pleasures in private. Illicit sex, drunkenness, parties on the beach, parties on boats. What happened at Baiae stayed at Baiae.”

More than any other emperor, Nero was infamous for his hedonism and Baiae was his escape. Here, he could indulge in his sadistic fantasies. “To Nero, Baiae represented everything he wished Rome was. This was much more than a second home. Now, he could bring the pleasures that he experienced here and try and replicate them in Rome, but really there was no comparison,” says Professor Dicus. “At Baiae, Nero could engage in his hedonistic lifestyle. He could take to the baths, enjoy the hot springs, eat fresh oysters, have boat parties, get drunk, have sex, all of this away from the drudgery of daily politics of Rome.”

But Baiae was more than a place of opulence, the Las Vegas of its day. It was also the site of some of the most treacherous political dealings of ancient Rome with Emperor Nero and his enemies hatching deadly plots against each other.

What lengths was Nero willing to take to gain his Aunt Domitia’s villa? What plans did Gaius Calpurnius Piso, a wealthy nobleman, have for the emperor as he vacationed at his villa? What scheme did Nero devise in Baiae to end the power struggle with his mother?

In the fourth century AD, seismic activity caused half of Baiae to sink into the bay.

Located 150 miles south of Rome, Baiae remains one of the least explored places in the Roman Empire, until now.

***Secrets of the Dead: Nero’s Sunken City*** is a production of Lion Television/An All3Media Company with B&B Film and THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET in association with Channel 4 and ZDF. Narrator is Jay O. Sanders. Writer and director is Stuart Elliot. Executive producers for Lion Television are Richard Bradley and Caterina Turroni. Executive producer for B&B Film is Raffaele Brunetti. Executive-in-Charge for WNET is Stephen Segaller. Executive Producer for WNET is Steve Burns. Supervising Producer for WNET is Stephanie Carter.

This program is among the full-length episodes that will be available for viewing after broadcast on ***Secrets of the Dead* Online** ([pbs.org/secrets](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=001RTHGE9iiv_3DWb5yBWYzXxBkFIQw7OIt1VMOEYibZ9aLpggHidRkylkAlaKHmvASnDCyAnGs1oxdmCeMrBppEJ7zXmxTncnGiQeMppA5Qnw=)). As one of PBS's ongoing limited primetime series, ***Secrets of the Dead***is a perennial favorite among viewers, routinely ranking among the 10 most-watched series on public television. Currently in its 16th season, ***Secrets of the Dead***continues its unique brand of archaeological sleuthing and employing advances in investigative techniques, forensic science and historical scholarship to offer new evidence about forgotten mysteries. ***Secrets of the Dead*** has received 10 CINE Golden Eagle Awards and six Emmy nominations, among numerous other awards.

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WNET is America’s flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](http://thirteen.org/) and [WLIW21](http://wliw.org/). WNET also operates [NJTV](http://www.njtvonline.org/), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (KidsThirteen, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature), [Great Performances](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf), [American Masters](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/), [Charlie Rose](http://www.charlierose.com) and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET’s groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](http://www.thirteen.org/get-the-math), [Oh Noah!](http://www.pbskids.org/noah) and [Cyberchase](http://www.pbskids.org/cyberchase) as well as [Mission US](http://www.mission-us.org/), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state’s unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](http://www.nyc-arts.org/), [Reel 13](http://www.thirteen.org/sites/reel13), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](http://www.njtvonline.org/news/) and [MetroFocus](http://www.thirteen.org/metrofocus), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition, WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](https://www.youtube.com/firstpersonpbs), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](https://www.youtube.com/chatterboxpbs). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: [www.thirteen.org/passport](http://www.thirteen.org/passport).

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