

GYPSUM / SELENITE - “Dinosaur Killer”, and the power behind Dr. Who’s Tardis!

“This is Gypsum. This is what killed the Dinosaurs” - Dr. Philippe Claeys, (BBC Documentary, 2017, “The Day The Dinosaurs Died”).

Who would have thought that one of the UK’s National Minerals would have been responsible for wiping out the Dinosaurs and ultimately leading to the evolution of Man?

About 66 million years ago the Chicxulub Asteroid hit Mexico. It was nearly 10 miles wide, and led to the Dinosaur Extinction. The Asteroid impact site contained Gypsum, which due to its sulphates blocked out the sun and affected the atmosphere and climate worldwide. A plume of vaporised rock spread across the whole world causing large climate change, killing plants and virtually all the non-avian Dinosaurs and other species. After this, smaller mammals came out of hiding, and essentially inherited the Earth, including Man.

So what else do we know about Selenite?

- 1. Selenite is named after the Ancient Greek word for the Moon, due to its shiny white colour - “Selene”.**
- 2. Some Selenite has been aged back to the Silurian Period, 443 million years old.**
- 3. The largest Selenite crystal ever found was in Mexico, 11 metres long weighing 55 tons.**
- 4. Some specimens are so clear that they have been used as glass for windows.**
- 5. Selenite has been mined in the UK since the 15th Century.**
- 6. There are 286 validated mines and localities where it is found in the UK.**
- 7. It is used in the building trade for plasterboard walls found in virtually every UK home.**
- 8. More Selenite is mined in the UK than coal, some mines stretching many miles underground.**
- 9. It is used in food to neutralise acids, bread, ice cream, cheese, medicine, cosmetics, and treating water for brewing beer.**
- 10. It is so soft it can be scratched with a fingernail, number 2 out of 10 on Mohs Hardness Scale.**
- 11. Selenite can be so clear that you can read through it - “Television Stone”.**
- 12. The UK supplies much of the modern world with Gypsum / Selenite.**
- 13. Dr. Who’s Tardis is powered by enormous Selenite crystals forming the internal structure of the Tardis.**