

ART HISTORY

Egyptian Art

GIZA



1876



EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

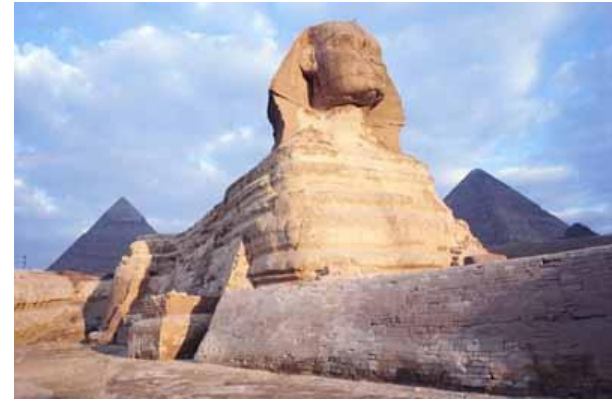
Considering Egyptian Society's obsession with immortality, it's not surprising that Egyptian art remained unchanged for 3,000 years. Their overriding concern was assuring a comfortable after-life for their rulers, who were considered gods. Colossal architecture and Egyptian art existed to surround the pharaoh's spirit with eternal glory.

EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

In pursuit of permanence, the Egyptians established the essentials of a major civilization: literature, medical science, and higher mathematics. Not only did they develop an impressive - albeit static - culture, but while elsewhere lesser civilizations rose and fell with the regularity of the Nile's annual floods, Egypt sustained the world's first large-scale, unified state for three millennia. pg. 8 The Annotated Mona Lisa

EGYPT - INTRODUCTION

- Nile
- Agriculture: basis of wealth
- Kingship: Government
- Religion: central roles in government and daily life
- Mountains and deserts
- Remained a unified state for some 3,000 years



EGYPT - INTRODUCTION

- Hieroglyphs - earliest Egyptian writing system which employed symbols
- Hieratic writing - shorthand version of hieroglyphs
- Demotic writing - 18th C from demos "the people" less formal and easy to master

EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

Much of what we know about ancient Egypt comes from the surviving tombs. Since Egyptians believed the pharaoh's ka, or spirit, was immortal, they stocked the tomb with every earthly delight for it to enjoy in perpetuity. Wall paintings, and hieroglyphics were a form of instant replay, inventorying the deceased's life and daily activities in minute detail. Portrait statues provided an alternative dwelling place for the ka, in case the mummified corpse deteriorated and could no longer house it.



KING TUT'S TOMB

KING TUT'S TOMB



EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

Sculpture and paintings followed a rigid formula for representing the human figure. In acres of stone carvings and drawings, the human form is depicted with a front view of the eye and shoulders and profile view of head, arms and legs. In wall paintings, the surface is divided into horizontal bands separated by lines. The spare, broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped figure wears a headdress and kilt, and stands rigidly, with arms at his side, one leg advanced. The size of a figure indicated rank, with pharaohs presented as giants towering over pygmy-size servants.

EGYPTIAN ART

There were no independent artists, just skilled craftsmen who supervised the making of the art and the tombs and pyramids. These people were all bound to their king who guaranteed their welfare or economic security. (According to most historic records, they were not slaves.) The burial tombs contained art that portrayed a particular ruler's daily environment so that his/her spirit after death could enjoy it in a happy afterlife. This included painted scenes of everyday activities, celebrations, plant life, and animals.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EGYPTIAN PAINTING & RELIEF SCULPTURE

- Heads are shown in profile to best capture the subject's identifying feature
- Eyes are rendered in frontal view
- Shoulders are represented frontally
- Hips, legs and feet are drawn in profile
- Persons of lesser social rank are represented more naturalistically

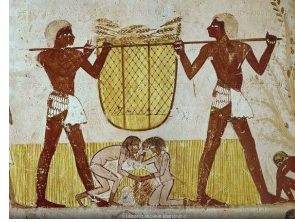
EGYPT: KEY VOCABULARY

- Pharaoh - The king who ruled with complete authority.
- Dynasty - A period during which a single family provided a succession of rulers.
- 3 kingdoms - Old, Middle & New Kingdom. Old Kingdom 3,100 BC Middle Kingdom 2050 - 1800 BC New Kingdom 1570 BC
- 332 BC Egypt conquered by Alexander the Great of Macedonia

EGYPT: KEY VOCABULARY

- Amenhotep IV (polytheistic to monotheistic) worshipped the sun god - ra
- Hellenistic Ruler 30 BC it was made a province of Rome
- Ka - The soul. At death, ka would leave the body for a time, to only later return with the body for the return for the next world.
- Sarcophagus- Stone Coffin
- Mastaba - low flat tomb
- Obelisk - Tall upright 4 sided pointed stone shafts

PAINTING



What surprises most visitors when they visit the monuments of ancient Egypt today is how well buildings and sculptures are preserved. Even more amazing is the amount of painting that can still be seen on the walls of tombs and temples. The Egyptians enjoyed color and beautifully decorated walls. They covered almost every inch of wall surface with paintings. Even the walls of tombs, covered over by tons of stone or earth, were covered with magnificent painted scenes of activities that the dead had enjoyed in life.



FOWLING SCENE

NEBAMUN FOWLING IN THE MARSHES, Tomb-chapel of Nebamun, c. 1350 B.C.E., 18th Dynasty, Paint on Plaster, 83 x 98 cm, Thebes, British Museum

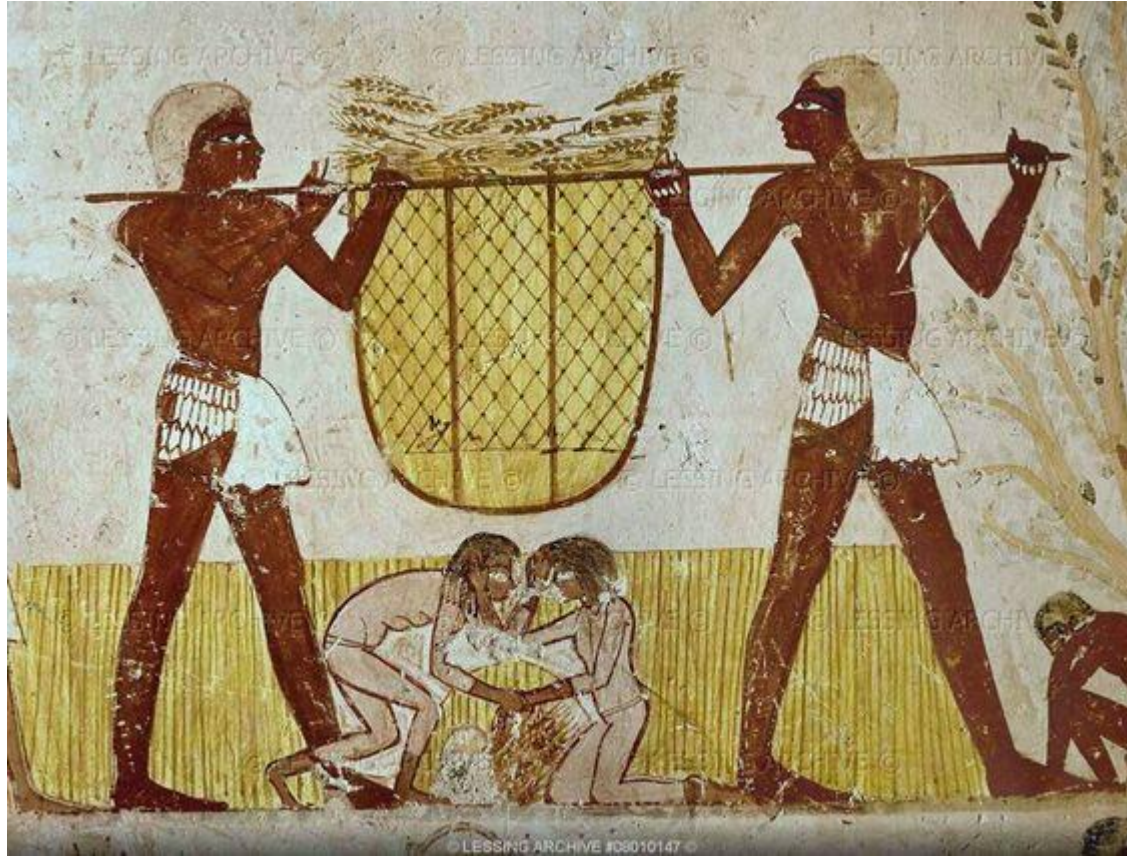
Here a rich young man is hunting geese and ducks. Do you recognize the Lotus and papyrus plants near the edge? The strange symbols are hieroglyphics; this was the Egyptian style of writing.

Pg. 43 Inside Art - Rebecca Brooks

EGYPTIAN PAINTING



Egyptian paintings of figures are similar to that of Syrian reliefs. The upper part of the body faces forward, while the head arms and legs are shown in profile. Though the painting has many details, there is no illusion that the figures or objects are three-dimensional or rounded. No value or shading has been used at all these techniques would come much later with Greek and Roman painting.



MEN TRANSPORTING CORN

This is a detail of a wall painting in the tomb of Mennah who recorded the crops and was estate inspector under Pharaoh Thutmosis IV during 1600 to 1400 BCE. The tomb is in Thebes, Egypt.



GIZA SPHINX WITH THE PYRAMID OF CHEPHREN



The Giza Sphinx with the body of a lion and the head of Chephren was carved from a rock outcropping and towers to 65 feet. It sat majestically for centuries but was gradually damaged by winds of sand and vandalism. Near it is the pyramid of Chephren made of over two millions blocks of limestone with an outer casing of polished limestone. Both were built c.2500 BCE



HOWARD CARTER IN
1922
EXCAVATING THE
TOMB OF
TUTANKHAMUN



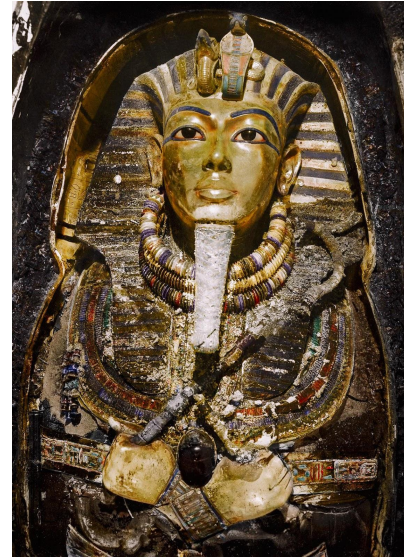
PORTRAIT OF TUTANKHAMUN

Tutankhamun's gold mask from his tomb in the Valley of the Kings was made during the period 1346 to 1337 BCE. Shaped from two sheets of gold, it was inlaid with precious jewels and minerals and was 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches high.

PORTRAIT OF TUTANKHAMUN

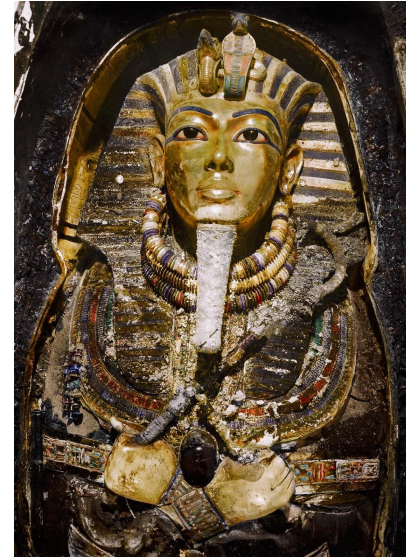
Although the portrait is probably idealized, we still have a feeling that this is how the pharaoh looked in life. Notice the elaborate headdress inlaid with semi precious stones as are the eyes. this mask covered the face of King tut's mummy. Both mummy and masks were then placed inside a case made of over a ton of solid gold! from works like this it is easy to see why the riches and crafts of the Egyptians were legendary.

pg.44 Art in History Rebecca Brooks



PORTRAIT OF TUTANKHAMUN

The most of their individual names are unknown to us the artisan crafts people of ancient Egypt were as skilled and creative as any working today. In the working of materials like ivory, glass, inlaid wood, precious stones and metals, the Egyptians had few equals. Using the simplest of tools, craftsmen were able to create masterpieces like the famous solid gold masks of Tutankhamon this remarkable object is not only a wonderful portrait, it is also one of the finest examples of gold crafting ever made. The young pharaoh (he died at 19) looks dignified and peaceful. pg.44 Art in History Rebecca Brooks



TUTANKHAMUN - VIRTUAL AUTOPSY



Freak show or
history or
infotainment -

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/oct/21/tutankhamun-desecration-computer-scan-images-pharaoh-archaeological>

FOUR COLOSSI OF RAMSES II (c. 1290-1224 BCE)



The four colossal seated statues of Ramses II were carved in the same rock as the Great Temple of Ramses II in Abu Simbel, Egypt and left partly attached to it. The height of the statues is 69 feet.

EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

Since statutes were intended to last eternally, they were made of hard substances like granite and diorite. Whether standing or seated, they included few projecting, breakable parts. The pose was always frontal and bi-symmetrical, with arms close to the torso.

DOUBLE PORTRAIT
OF KING
MENKAURE





MENKAURE AND HIS WIFE, QUEEN KHAMERERNEBTY

A double portrait of Khafre's son, King Menkaure who ruled from 2532–2503 BCE, and a queen probably Khamereernebtwy was discovered in the funerary temple built by Menkaure. The figures, carved from a single block of stone, are visually joined by the queen's symbolic gesture of embrace. The king, depicted in accordance with cultural and political ideals as an athletic, youthful figure nude to the waist, stands in a typically Egyptian balance pose with 1 foot extended, his arms straight at his sides and his fists clenched. His equally youthful queen mimics his striding pose with a smaller step forward, and her sheer, tight fitting garments reveal the curves of her body. pg. 51 Art a Brief History Stokstad



SEATED PORTRAIT OF CHEFREN (KHAFRE) WITH FALCON

Egyptian sculpture always shows the figure facing forward in a stiff, posed position. The faces are idealized portraits, but are probably closer to a true likeness than the Sumerian portraits.

The subjects of Egyptian portraits are shown with great dignity as is this portrait of Khafre. Can you see the wings of the hawk on either side of his head? The hawk represents one of the most famous Egyptian gods called Horus. His power protects the king and gives him strength and wisdom.



SEATED PORTRAIT OF CHEFREN (KHAFRE) WITH FALCON

The headdress the pharaoh is wearing represents the mane of a lion. Do you remember the Sphinx? This headdress is one of the ways you can tell that a sculpture is Egyptian and that the subject is the Pharaoh.



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AMUN COLUMNS

NEFERTITI'S TOMB





Nefertiti and her ka
embraced by Osiris

Nefertiti as Pharaoh welcomed
by the goddess Nut

Tutankhamun Opens the Mouth
of the mummified Nefertiti



NEFERTITI

1360 BCE BERLIN

This sculpture portrait of Queen Nefertit [nef-fur-TEE-tee] is considered one of the finest portraits ever created. This beautiful woman was King Tut's aunt. Her name is well suited to her face. Nefertiti means "the beautiful one has come". Do you think the sculptor idealized this portrait? Compared to other ancient portraits you have seen, doesn't she seem strangely modern? Would you be surprised to see her face on the cover of a fashion magazine?

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EGYPT: VIDEO RESOURCES

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/Art-1010/v/ancient-near-eastern-and-ancient-egyptian-art>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3Wvw6BivVI> Ancient Egypt: Crash Course World History #4

<https://www.dcmp.org/media/8431-the-time-compass-mesopotamia/stream?digest=39509>