

Egyptian Art

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

- Egyptian artists focused on representing royal figures and divinities and on the function of funerary and palatial complexes within its cultural context. Works of art illustrate the active exchange of ideas and reception of artistic styles among the Mediterranean cultures and the subsequent influence on the classical world.
- Religion played a significant role in the art and architecture of the ancient Near East with cosmology guiding representations of deities and kings who themselves assume divine attributes.
- The art of ancient Egypt embodies a sense of permanence. It was created for eternity in the service of a culture that focused on preserving a cycle of rebirth.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- Funerary objects dominate, including large scale sculptures, stone architecture, and tomb artifacts—all in the service of the god-like pharaoh.
- Strict Egyptian stylistic formulas are applied to the gods and pharaohs; they clearly show others to be subordinate and lacking idealization.

IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

1. The difference between a mastaba and a ziggurat.
2. The moving of the temple of Ramses.
3. Significant stylistic changes made regarding royal burial sites after the Old Kingdom.
4. The relationship between Egyptian Art, and Egyptian religious belief.
5. The stylistic conventions of Old Kingdom funerary sculpture.
6. Egyptian artists differentiated between royal figures and regular folks.
7. Elaborate funerary practices led to the erection of mastabas, pyramids and rock-cut tombs in sacred imperial precincts throughout Egypt.
8. Egyptian figures generally have broad frontal shoulders and profiled heads, torsos, and legs.
9. Old Kingdom figures show an unyielding stance and formidable expression; Middle Kingdom works to have more relaxed figures and emotional faces; the New Kingdom is characterized by rounded and elongated figures that betray an intimacy hitherto unknown.

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| • Amarna | • fresco secco | • necropolis |
| • Amen-Re | • hieroglyphic writing | • New Kingdom |
| • atlantid | • Horus | • Old Kingdom |
| • Aton | • hypostyle hall | • pylon |
| • ben-ben | • Imhotep | • Re or Amen-Re |
| • Book of the Dead | • Isis | |
| • canon of proportion | • ka | |
| • caryatid | • mastaba | |
| • clerestory | • Middle Kingdom | |

RESOURCES

- An introduction to Egyptian Art
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibp_i7bekQU
- Walk Like an Egyptian
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv6tuzHUuuk>
- Tice Art intro to Mesopotamia and Egypt
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_8yPgC9zQc

Egyptian Art

JOURNAL

*Palette of King Narmer
(3.1, 2.2, 3.3)*

CONTEXT

Egypt gives the appearance of being a monolithic civilization whose history stretches steadily into the past with little change or fluctuation. However, Egyptian history is a constant ebb and flow of dynastic fortunes, at times at the height of its powers, other times invaded by jealous neighbors or wracked by internal feuds.

Historical Egypt begins with the unification of the country under King Narmer in predynastic times, an event celebrated on the Palette of Narmer (3000-2920 BCE) The subsequent early dynasties, known as the Old Kingdom, featured massively built monuments to the dead, called pyramids, which are emblematic of Egypt today.

After a period of anarchy, Mentihotep II unified Egypt for a second time in a period called the Middle Kingdom. Pyramid building was abandoned in favor of smaller and certainly less expensive rock-cut tombs.

More anarchy followed the breakdown of the Middle Kingdom. Invaders from Asia swept through, bringing technological advanced along with their domination. Soon enough, Egyptians righted their political ship, removed the foreigners, and embarked upon the New Kingdom, a period of unparalleled splendor.

One New Kingdom pharaoh, Akhenaton, markedly altered Egyptian society by abandoning the worship of many gods in favor of one god, Aton, with himself portrayed as his representative on earth. Aton was represented as sun disk emanating rays, instead of gods that were human and/or animal. This new religion ushered in a dramatic change in artistic style called the Amarna period. Although Akhenaton's religious innovations did not survive him, the artistic changes he promoted were long lasting.

After the demise of the New Kingdom, Egypt fell prey to the ambitions of Persia, Assyria, and Greece, ultimately undoing itself at the hands of Rome in 30 BCE. Modern Egyptology began with the 1799 discovery of the Rosetta Stone, from which hieroglyphics could be translated into modern languages. The scramble for Egyptian artifacts culminated in 1922 with the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb by Howard Carter.



WORKS OF ART

- Palette of King Narmer 3000-2920 BCE
- Seated Scribe 2620-2500 BCE
- Great Pyramids of Gizeh 2550-2490 BCE
- Menkaure and Khamerernebty 2440-2472 BCE
- Hypostyle Hall, Temple of Amen-Re 1550-1250 BCE
- Akhenaton and Nefertiti and Three Daughters 1353-1335 BCE
- Innermost Coffin of Tutankhamen 1323 BCE
- Last Judgement of Hu Nefer from His Tomb 1275 BCE
- *Senmut*, Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut 1250 BCE

ASSIGNMENTS

- Read Gardner's pages 55-81
- Complete homework packet
- Write journal
- Fill in flashcards
- Organize your notebook

HOMWORK DUE: _____