



Mummy Mask

Date

332 BCE - 330 CE

Medium

Linen, plaster, gold leaf, and pigment

Description

This mummy mask was placed over a deceased body in combination with other cartonnage pieces such as a foot case and breast plate. Cartonnage (linen covered with plaster) coverings served as protection to the body; additionally cartonnage masks provided an idealized portrait, in no sense a true likeness, of the deceased. This gilded mask is painted with figures of the gods Osiris and Isis, hieroglyphs and a red medallion at the crest of the

head. The use of gold not only marks the status of the deceased but, is meant to emulate the golden skin of the gods. Remarkably, a true portrait of the deceased remains embedded in this mask. A digital image of the interior reveals the face of the young deceased male, possibly achieved when the embalmers laid layers of linen and plaster over his face to form an impression for the mummy mask.

Dimensions

15 × 12 3/4 × 10 1/2 in. (38.1 × 32.4 × 26.7 cm) Mount: 19 3/4 × 15 3/4 × 13 1/2 in. (50.2 × 40 × 34.3 cm)