



Unknown (Egyptian)  
*Cartonnage fragment*, 525–332 B.C.  
gesso and gouache over linen or papyrus  
17 15/16 x 6 7/8 in. (45.5 x 17.5 cm)  
Anonymous gift  
93.1.133

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*Cartonnage fragment*  
525–332 B.C.

A cartonnage was made of layers of papyrus and linen glued together and inscribed or painted with spells of protection. After mummification, the cartonnage was placed on top of the mummy. Then, the mummy would be wrapped in a shroud. In this cartonnage, portions of winged figures can be seen, symbolizing protection. The goddesses Isis, Nut, and Ma'at are all figures who might appear with wings. A translation of the hieroglyphs on this cartonnage fragment indicates "a royal offering" to Osiris.

Nut, the goddess of the heavens, was said to have united with her brother Geb, the earth god, to produce Osiris and other deities. Isis, sister and wife of Osiris, was the mother of Horus. Ma'at was the personification of order.

### Sources

Translation from curatorial file

Ikram, Salima. *Death and Burial in Ancient Egypt*. Great Britain: Longman, 2003.

Wilkinson, Richard H. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. Thames & Hudson, 2003.



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## DISCUSS

*Cartonnage fragment*  
525–332 B.C.

This artifact is a fragment of cartonnage. Cartonnage was made with layers of papyrus and linen which were glued together, inscribed or painted with protective spells, and placed on top of a mummy's wrappings. To learn more, click on the EXPLORE tab.

Archaeologists learn a great deal from close, careful examination of artifacts like this cartonnage fragment. Roll your cursor over the image of the fragment to magnify. Take a close look.

- What details do you notice?
- What types of colors do you see?
- What shapes or patterns do you notice?
- What types of lines can you find?
- How is the composition organized?
- Do the forms look flat or is there the illusion of depth in space?
- How would you describe the background?
- Is there a border?
- Can you identify any text (hieroglyphs)?
- How would you describe the texture?
- Can you find areas where pieces of the cartonnage are missing?



## CREATE

### *Cartonnage fragment* 525–332 B.C.

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How do you think this cartonnage might have looked when it was complete? Make a drawing to show your ideas.

Scroll down the page to view complete pieces of cartonnage from the same period (Late Period, ca.712–332 BCE) as the fragment in WCMA's collection.

### Tips

Egyptian artists often used grids to organize their compositions. Try making your drawing on graph paper.

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Egyptian artwork often includes symmetrical elements (things that are the same on both sides or a mirror image of one another). To include symmetry in your design, fold your drawing paper in half. Unfold. Use a pencil (press firmly) to draw on one side of the paper. Re-fold along the same line. Use a pencil to color the back side of your drawing. Your drawing will transfer to the opposite side of the paper.



Unknown (Egyptian)  
*Mummy and Cartonnage of Hor*  
ca. 712–664 BCE  
linen, painted and gessoed  
69 3/4 x 18 1/16 in. (177.2 x 45.8 cm)  
Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund  
37.50E  
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Unknown (Egyptian)  
*Inner Cartonnage of Gautseshenu*  
700–650 BCE  
linen, plaster, pigment  
64 3/16 x 14 15/16 in. (163 x 38 cm)  
Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund  
34.1223  
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