



Unknown (Egyptian)
Amulet
date unknown
faience
1 3/8 x 1/4 in. (3.5 x 0.6 cm)
Gift of Horace Mayer
61.19.1.G

Bes is also often seen sporting a plumed headdress. Images of Bes not only appeared on amulets, but on headrests, beds, mirrors, jars, cosmetic containers, and possibly also on masks worn during dances and performances. This amulet is made of faience, a sandy mixture of crushed quartz, natron, and pigment that was heated to fuse the mixture together. It could be pressed into molds or shaped by hand before firing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amulet

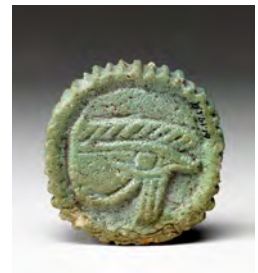
Amulets were personal adornments worn by the living and placed on mummy wrappings to provide protection and aid on the journey from death to the afterlife. The color, shape, and other qualities of the materials were believed to endow the amulet and its wearer with special powers and protections. This amulet, usually worn by women and children as protection, bears an image of Bes on one side and a wejdjet eye on reverse. Bes was a popular household god associated with childbirth who watched over women and children. The wedjet eye, also known as the eye of Horus, was believed to provide strength, protection, and good health.

Bes was usually portrayed as a short, stocky, leonine figure with a large head featuring a mask-like and bearded face with staring eyes and a protruding tongue.

RELATED IMAGES



Sacred eye amulet
date unknown
faience; 9/16 x 11/16 in., 1/8 in. (1.5 x 1.8 cm, 0.3 cm). Gift of Horace Mayer (60.39.2.E)



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faience; 1 3/8 x 1/4 in. (3.5 x 0.6 cm). Gift of Horace Mayer (61.19.1.G)

Sources

Andrews, Carol. *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*. 1994 (British Museum Press). University of Texas Press, 1998.

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



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DISCUSS

Amulet

Ancient Egyptians wore and carried many different kinds of amulets, which were believed to provide health, well-being, and protection from evil.

Do you own, wear, or carry something around with you that holds a special meaning? What does it look like? Does it make you feel safe? Happy? Brave? Lucky?

This amulet bares the face of a god named Bes. What can you tell about Bes from looking closely at the amulet? Click on the EXPLORE tab to learn more about him.



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CREATE

Amulet

This amulet is made of faience, a sandy mixture of crushed quartz, natron, and pigment (color particles), which could be shaped by hand or pressed into a mold. Like clay, it was then fired (baked) until hard.

Create your own amulet mold:

1. Cut out a small circle of cardboard.
2. Make a simple line drawing of an eye or another symbol with a pencil.
3. Place some glue in a small container. Cut a piece of yarn or string to glue onto each line in your drawing. Dip each piece of string into the glue to coat, allow any excess to drip off, then place the string directly on top of the pencil lines.
4. Once your mold has dried, it is ready to use. Place a piece of plastic wrap over the mold. Take a small ball of clay and place it onto the mold to cover. Press gently on all areas of the clay, and then peel the mold and the clay apart.