

GALERIE GOLCONDA

ARCHÉOLOGIE MUSÉALE
FOSSILES – BIJOUX RARES ET ANCIENS
CABINET DE CURIOSITÉS DES GRANDES CIVILISATIONS

CERTIFICATE

A FUNERARY MASK LATE PERIOD (664-332 BC)

MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUE : A sculpted wooden mask covered with a thin layer of white stucco, (made with either lead or chalk or both) and painted in black in the eye area. A man's face; big eyebrows and round pupils characteristic of Egyptian art, straight nose and full lips. Once fixed to the upper part of an old sarcophagus as the presence of the wooden pegs shows. Very good preservation, original paint. Some light traces of discoloring due to age.

ORIGIN : Funerary masks are a symbol of rebirth and participate in the afterlife of the deceased. Chapter 151B of the Book of the Dead emphasizes that the head of the dead must be particularly well protected because each part of it is associated with a divinity. A version of this text is written on the back of the mask of Tutankhamun: "Hail, beautiful of face, lord of sight, bound by Ptah-Sokar, raised by Anubis, whom there has been given the pillars of Shu, beautiful face that is in the gods, your right eye is the evening boat, your left eye the morning boat, your eyebrows are the nine gods, your brow is Anubis".

In ancient Egypt, white "*Hedj*" paint was obtained from natural cerussite and was a symbol of happiness, purity, sacredness and simple luxury. Tools, sacred objects and even priest's sandals were white for this reason. Sacred animals were also depicted as white.

Black color, obtained using galena (a combustion of sulfur and lead), was the color of rebirth but also of preservation. The ancient name of Egypt was *Kemet*, which means black ground, the color of the life-giving silt left by the flooding of the Nile. It was also the color of Osiris, "the black one", resurrected god of the dead, and the color of the underworld. Black was often used to invoke the process of regeneration ascribed to the god Osiris. It was also used to represent hair and the skin color of the people of the South: Nubians and Kushites.

DIMENSIONS Height: 42 cm/ 16,54'' - Width: 28 cm/11,03''

TEST: A Carbon-14 test from Zurich University n°14C-AMS 32124 confirms the stylistic dating.

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