

# Ancient Egyptian Art History

## Art History

A lot of what we know about the Ancient Egyptians comes from their art. From the many pieces of art they created we can learn things like what they looked like, what kind of clothes they wore, what jobs they worked, and what they considered important.



*Nefertiti*

## Similar Art for Over 3000 Years

The civilization of Ancient Egypt ruled the land of the Nile for over 3000 years. Surprisingly enough, their art changed little during that time. The original style of art was first used in 3000 B.C. and the most respected artists continued to copy these styles for the next 3000 years.

## Religion and Art

Much of the artwork created by the Ancient Egyptians had to do with their religion. They would fill the tombs of the Pharaohs with paintings and sculptures. Much of this artwork was there to help the Pharaohs in the afterlife. Temples were another popular place for art. The temples often held large statues of their gods as well as many paintings on the walls.

## Report Ad Egyptian Sculpture

The Egyptians are famous for their giant works of sculptures. Some examples of this include the Great Sphinx of Giza and the statues of Ramses II at the Abu Simbel temples.

In the picture to the side the statues of Ramses II are shown. They are each over 60 feet tall. The Sphinx at Giza is over 240 feet long! Although they are famous for their giant statues, the



*Abu Simbel Temple*

the Egyptians also carved smaller, more ornate sculptures.

They used various materials including alabaster, ivory, limestone, basalt, wood gilded with gold, and sometimes even solid gold.



The Golden funeral mask of Tutankhamun is an example of the intricate work of Ancient Egyptian sculpture. It is the funerary mask of a pharaoh named Tutankhamen. The expression on his face is the same used to convey the look of all the pharaohs throughout the history of Egypt. The coloring of the collar is made with semiprecious stones and the stripes on the headdress are made with blue glass. The rest of the mask is made from twenty-four pounds of solid gold!

### **Egyptian Painting and Tomb Walls**

In Ancient Egypt the tomb walls of the rich and powerful were often filled with paintings. These paintings were there to help the person in the afterlife. They often depicted the person buried passing into the afterlife. They would show scenes of this person happy in the afterlife. In one painting the man buried is shown hunting and his wife and son are in the picture.



*The painting is a picture on a tomb wall of Queen Nefertari, wife of Ramses the Great.*

### **Relief**

A relief is a sculpture that is part of a wall or structure. The Egyptians often carved them into the walls of their temples and tombs. Reliefs were generally painted as well.

### **Interesting Facts about Ancient Egyptian**

- Art They mostly used the colors blue, black, red, green, and gold in their paintings.
- A lot of Egyptian art depicted the pharaohs. This was often in a religious sense as the pharaohs were considered gods.
- Many of the paintings of Ancient Egypt survived for so many thousands of years because of the extremely dry climate of the area.
- Small carved models were sometimes included inside tombs. These included slaves, animals, boats, and buildings that the person may need in the afterlife.
- A majority of the art hidden in tombs was stolen by thieves over thousands of years.