

The Mummy Board of Ankhefenmut

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Mummy Board of Ankhefenmut
British Museum, London, England
From Bab el-Gasus, Thebes, Egypt
Mid-21st Dynasty, around 1000 BC
Third Intermediate Period
The priest and sculptor of the Temple of Mut.

Ankhefenmut's title was the priest and sculptor of the temple of the goddess Mut, consort of Amun-Re. Mut's cult-temple was at Thebes, its ruins lying to the south of the great Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak.

The colour palette used on Ankhefenmut's mummy board is limited to red, black and yellow. White is used, but only for the eyes and details of the net which covers the lower body of the figure. Ankhefenmut is shown wearing the usual wig and garland collar around his upper body. On the lower half of the body is a cross-hatched design, which imitates a bead net on a red background. The design echoes real nets, made of faience beads, which have been found in some cases placed over the mummy inside the coffin. The vertical and horizontal bands on the lower body match the bandages on the outside of mummies of this period.

The goddess Nut is shown protecting the deceased with her feathered wings. She first appears on coffins and mummy boards from the New Kingdom (1550 to 1070 B.C.). She still appears, in human form, on the interior of coffins in the Roman period, a thousand years later.

There are other protective symbols on this coffin: the wedjat eyes which form a band on the right arm, perhaps representing a bracelet. These amulets were worn by the living, as well as being placed on the mummy, and represented on coffins.

