

Ancient Art

WADJET

A bronze sculpture Wadjet is one of the best examples of Late Period in Egyptian culture (the 26th Dynasty, about 664-525 B.C. or later). This impressive sculpture represents the goddess Wadjet, protectress of the king and tutelary deity of Lower Egypt. Usually Egyptian goddesses depict with the head of a lioness, but this one has a full disc instead of head. Wadjet is supposed to have been an offering in a temple and may have served as a container for the remains of sacred animal.

The figure isn't very big. Its height is 13in (33cm). There is a sacred cobra on the headdress, inscribed base and the tangs that attached the statuette to a pedestal or other support. It's known that each such a figure should have had some special attributes. Probably a papyrus scepter in the proper left hand and an ankh in the right one are lost. We can notice that the figure has well rendered patterning of the lion mane, broad collar, armbands and bracelets. The sculpture's got very distinct shapes, the figure is slender and properly sized. It creates an impression of the thing which a master has thought over, put a bit of his soul and spirit into each of his movements when creating a piece of art. Notwithstanding it is a ritual figure, Wadjet is carefully carved and seems to have perfect proportions.

RED-FIGURE NECK-AMPHORA

Red-Figure Neck-Amphora is an example of Greek pottery which was created between the 7th and 2nd centuries B.C. Its height is 19½in (48,9cm) and it's attributed to the Hector Painter in Greece, Attica about 440-430 B.C. The amphora is two-handed, decorated with sophisticated golden pictures. You can see the trio responsible for the season, harvest and fertility on it. Also you can see the demigod Triptolemos, his foster mother Demeter stands behind him. She is patron goddess of agriculture. Her daughter Persephone pouring wine into Triptolemos' cup is pictured on the amphora too. She also holds the torch that lights her way in the underworld, where she is confined part of each year, causing winter to appear in the mortal world.

For me seeing the original of the amphora was very different what I saw on pictures for a picture can't display the real color of the painting which is very accurately made. Besides that, in the picture one can't see it from different angles and can't imagine how beautifully it may shine in the light, the picture can't show all the thinnest lines of the patterns and the slightest changes of colors which indicate the transition from light to shadow.

HOPE ATHENA

The height of Hope Athena is 86in (218,4sm). It's really tall. The statue belongs to the 2nd century A.D. after a Greek original of the 5th century B.C. It is made of white marble which gives it some special beauty and majesty. The sculptor of this must have seen numerous older Greek and Roman copies based on a prototype Athena of classical Greece.

When looking at the statue in the picture I could think of it just like of all the others: "Large, white, like many others, typical for Greek and Roman art..." But when I saw its real size, forms, color... It created an impression of a vigorous and gorgeous masterpiece. The creator has worked out every detail, perfectly polished the surface, accurately sized and gave perfect forms to a piece of marble for it to become a representation of the great goddess, of the great culture.

I believe it should be said that seeing a masterpiece in a picture and seeing the original are completely different things. A picture cannot make a full impression one gets when seeing the original. The color differs, the shapes seem different: each detail can be seen and more details discovered. The original creates a completely different impression, it draws into itself and causes a variety of feelings one can never experience having not seen it. So visiting the museum gave me a great experience of understanding and appreciating the art and I'm thankful to the people who gave me such an opportunity.

