

3015

Pair Statue of Nebsen and Nebet-ta

Richard Fazzini: This statue of Nebsen and Nebet-ta is a wonderful pair statue of a couple. He was a scribe of the royal treasury, and she was a songstress of the goddess Isis, which means she had a clerical function in the temple to the goddess Isis. These people lived in the earlier part of the 18th Dynasty. But their statue was actually made a couple of reigns later, and so their appearance is very different from what they would have had in life. They have fancier headdresses, fancier necklaces, and much more elegant eyes and fancy eyeliner, all of which was coming into Egyptian art in the 18th Dynasty, as the empire got wealthier and wealthier and a little bit more sophisticated.

The whole back of the statue is covered with inscriptions, and there are symbols up at the top. Those symbols are protective for the people mentioned below, Nebsen and Nebet-ta.

Such statues were placed in temples, and, hopefully some of the people coming into the temple would stop and read an inscription or say a prayer on behalf of Nebsen and Nebet-ta. And that was certainly why their son dedicated the statue. So it was a way to help keep his parents alive forever—as well as bringing them a little bit more up to date in their makeup and costume.