



## Fragment of a sunk relief: a mourner

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**On display**

**Title/Description:** Fragment of a sunk relief: a mourner

**Born:** 1370 c. BC

**Object Type:** Relief

**Materials:** Limestone, Plaster

**Measurements:** h. 319 x w. 315 x d. 52 mm

**Accession Number:** 312

**Historic Period:** Dynasty XVIII (c. 1370 BC), 13th Century BC

**Production Place:** Africa, Egypt, El-Amarna

**Credit Line:** Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

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The illustrations published by Bouriant et al. (1903: pls. x, Xlll, top register) show Wall B of Room gamma of the royal tomb at El-Amarna before it was damaged and pieces were removed during the 1930s. The whereabouts of most of the fragments are unknown. The complete relief showed (in the upper register beyond the figure of the Princess Neferneferuaten-tasherit) the mourning woman of whose figure this piece is a fragment. She was shown kneeling, her left arm outstretched with its palm resting flat on the ground, her right hand lifted up in the action of pouring dust over her head. She partially obscured the lower part of another mourning woman who stood beside her.

All that remains here is the upper part, in which we can see the woman's shoulder-length hair confined by a mourning band tied in a knot at the rear; she wears a sleeved garment, faces left and raises her right arm. On the extreme right edge is the line of the thigh of the standing mourner.

As the rock of the royal tomb was somewhat coarse nummulitic limestone, its walls were covered with a layer of plaster in which the reliefs were cut and modelled. The plaster is coarse and pitted, perhaps through the loss of a finer skin, visible in places, for example by the chin. For discussion and illustration of the El-Amarna tomb fragments, see Martin (1974: no. 469, pl. 61) and Werbrouck (1938: 20, pl. Xlll). The entire Wall B, with the fragment in its original position, is now reconstructed in Martin (1989: pl. 68; cf. also pl. 70 and illustration below).

Cyril Aldred & Geoffrey T. Martin, 1997

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection* 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997)

TO-BE-REPLACED-WITH-A-GAP

The New Kingdom pharaoh Akhenaten presided over a major religious shift in Egypt. He abandoned polytheism and promoted a monotheistic religion worshipping the Aten (Sun-disk), centred around his new capital city of Amarna. Alongside these reforms, the art of Akhenaten's court became more expressionistic, markedly different from Egypt's earlier, more rigid style. Various cast as a visionary or heretic, Akhenaten proved greatly inspirational to twentieth-century artists, as did the artistic style of his reign.

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## **Provenance**

Considered to be from the Royal Tomb of Akhenaten at El-Amarna.

Purchased by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury K. J. Hewett in 1956.

Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.

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