

Pasherienaset's inner coffin

Late period

Glued, plastered, and painted fabric

H.: 1.48 m; W.: 47 cm; D.: 17 cm

Department of Egyptian Antiquities, Musée du Louvre (E 21611)

Inside this coffin is a depiction of the goddess Nut, raising her arms to hold up a djed pillar on which are inscribed formulaic offerings to Osiris, Lord of Busiris and Abydos. The pillar is flanked by two falcons representing the god Sokar, then two mummy-like figures, one with an ibis head, Thot of Ashmunein, and the other with a falcon head, Harendotes. Other deities surround Nut: behind her is falcon-headed Re and Atum, under whom are seated to spirits, Ankh and Djed. In front of Nut is Khnum the potter and one of the sons of Horus, below whom are two standing spirits, Heheh and Djet, symbols of cyclical and linear eternity. The lower part of the case has a startling depiction of Nun, the primal sea, in the form of a kneeling flood deity. Rain represented by thin threads of water ending in the cross of life fall on him, seeming to come from the sky above. Finally, this rich iconography includes a selective list of *pehu*, marshy lands conducive to hunting. The entire work offers an image of the universe in its spatial and temporal dimensions, in a play of subtle parallels and oppositions. Few coffins of any period contain so many symbols and notions of this type in their decoration—which raises intriguing questions about Pasherienaset, the person who commissioned it.



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