

Statuary from Royal Buildings at Amarna

Its Creation and Contents

by Kristin Thompson and Marsha Hill

DESCRIPTION:

Over more than a century and a quarter of excavations the royal and administrative buildings in the city of Amarna have yielded the remains of many hundreds of statues that had been part of Akhenaten's visionary plan. But fragmentation and dispersal have up until now made the results almost invisible. Only a relatively small number of the original statues have been widely known, even to experts. The present publication brings together all these traces of the city's past to reveal the abundance, beauty, variety, and novelty of the statuary and to begin the process of reintegrating it in considerations of the temples and palaces of the city.

The work is presented in two parts. The first volume presents extensive observations about the creation of the statuary, comprising chapters dealing with the range of materials and the methods of working them, a detailed explication of the novel creation of composite statuary, and an overview of the workshop buildings that have been identified so far at Amarna.

In the second volume, the excavated fragments themselves, most of them previously unpublished, are catalogued in a series of chapters devoted to individual royal buildings. The original statues are envisioned and analysed for their contexts, resulting in new information about these buildings, the intentions and concerns behind them, and the evolution in those intentions.

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CONTRIBUTORS BIOGRAPHIES:

Since 2001, Kristin Thompson has been a member of Barry Kemp's expedition at Amarna. Initially she registered hundreds of fragments from previous excavation teams' dumps. Her work quickly expanded to include joining some of these fragments, including reassembling substantial sections of a major statue. Kristin also traced many of these items to the workshop or building where they originated. As hundreds of additional pieces continued to be found, it became obvious that a publication of all known pieces from royal buildings at the site was essential. In preparing this volume, she has visited twenty-eight museums with Amarna pieces.

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Marsha Hill is Curator Emerita in the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, after a career there of over forty years. Marsha specialises in sculpture and its place in Egyptian culture. She studied the large quantity of Amarna statuary fragments that came to the Museum from Howard Carter's work for Petrie in the Amarna Great Aten Temple sanctuary and related pieces in other collections and at the site. In 2004 she joined forces with Kristin on the larger project of this book. Marsha has been a regular member of Barry Kemp's Amarna Project team since 2012 when work began on the Great Aten Temple.