

# ArchaeaTechnica

Art Conservation Services



## Carlos Museum Mummy Diary

Day 1- Tuesday, June 8 was the first day of the mummy conservation project at the Michael C. Carlos Museum. Chief Conservator Renée Stein, and I, Consulting Conservator Mimi Leveque, along with staff conservators Brittany Dinneen and Kaitlyn Wright as well as interns Leah Oliver and Anna Connolly, will be working with two mummies and associated decorative trappings over the next two weeks. As you watch the Mummy-Cam videos, we will also try to keep you up to date with the work as it progresses through daily diaries, although we may fall behind a bit if the work gets too intense.



*Bringing the mummies to Ackerman Hall*

We would like to introduce you to the mummies. Both were from the site of Akhmim in Egypt and they date from the Ptolemaic Period (332 – 30 BCE). The one in the back is Taosiris; her name meaning “the one of Osiris” . Her coffin inscription states that she was the *wab*- priestess of Osiris, daughter of Nesmin and Taamun. Her horizontally wrapped outer linen bandages were coated on the upper side with a black resin. A fine linen shroud covers the outer wrappings; it was once dyed a pink or pale red but has now faded to beige- you can see some of the original color in less faded areas in the image below. Her CT scans revealed that she was over 30 when she died.



A group of decorative trappings once were secured to the mummy with linen bands but they had been removed and stored separately; their presence accounts for the less faded areas on the shroud. They

are made of a material called cartonnage, a composite material used by the ancient Egyptians to create a lightweight, smooth hard surface to support paintings. It is made from layered strips of linen, saturated with animal glue, and shaped – in some cases, like the mask, over or in a clay mold. The linen surface is covered with a ground material (like gesso), either calcium carbonate or calcium sulphate-based, on one or both sides, then painted.

Taosiris's trappings are a painted and gilded cartonnage mask, a pectoral panel with a broadcollar and an image of the goddess Nut with outstretched wings, an abdominal covering with images of the mummy on a bier mourned by Isis and Nephthys, flanked by the sons of Horus and mourners, and a badly damaged foot covering with the remains of sandalled feet.



*The mask*



*the pectoral panel*



*The abdominal panel*



*the foot covering*

The second mummy has been called Padibastet, due to a mistaken translation of the hieroglyphic text block on the coffin by the previous owners. Unfortunately, the actual Egyptian name of the individual is

not known, as the coffin was severely overcleaned in the past, erasing the actual name of the mummy. This mummy originally had a fine shroud and probably cartonnage trappings, like those of Taosiris, but they have become lost over time. The body was wrapped in many layers of linen and the outermost layer was covered with a black resinous coating. His CT scans revealed him to have been in his 60s when he died.



*The mummy of "Padibastet"*

Over the next two weeks we will be examining, cleaning and stabilizing these mummies and the cartonnage trappings. Stay in touch by watching the Carlos Museum Mummy Cam.

The next report will describe the current conditions to be addressed through our treatment.