

Finch & C^o



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BASALT STONE COSMETIC PALETTE

AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN BASALT STONE COSMETIC PALETTE SET WITH FOUR LUGS AROUND THE RIM

LATE DYNASTIC PERIOD / 664 - 332BC

SIZE: 3CM HIGH, 12CMDIA - 1¼ INS HIGH, 4¾ INS DIA

LITERATURE

KOHL-RIMMED EYES, ELABORATELY COIFFED AND PERFUMED WIGS, MINIATURE STONE POTS FILLED WITH SCENTED UNGUENTS AND PALETTES FOR MIXING COSMETIC APPLICATIONS, ALL CONJURE UP EXOTIC IMAGES OF ANCIENT EGYPTIANS. FOR THE UPPER CLASSES AND NOBILITY THEY WERE PART OF THEIR DAILY LIVES. BOTH MEN AND WOMEN USED COSMETICS TO ENHANCE THEIR APPEARANCE, AND HEALTH CONCERNS AS WELL RELIGIOUS AND MAGICAL BELIEFS PROMPTED THE USE OF MANY TYPES OF PAINTS, OILS AND MEDICAL REMEDIES.

PALETTES WERE USED BY BOTH SEXES TO PREPARE EYE PAINT. ORES OR MINERALS WERE GROUND DIRECTLY ONTO THE STONE AND THE RESULTING POWDER WAS APPLIED DRY OR MIXED WITH RESIN OR OIL TO FORM EYE PAINT. KOHL, A BLACK COLOURANT WAS PRODUCED FROM POWDERED GALENA. GREEN AND RED WERE PRODUCED FROM MALACHITE AND HEMATITE. BOTH BLACK AND GREEN WERE COMMONLY USED TO OUTLINE THE RIM OF THE EYE AND GREEN WAS ALSO USED TO COLOUR THE EYELID. IN ADDITION TO ENHANCING APPEARANCE, KOHL SERVED THE PRACTICAL FUNCTION OF PREVENTING DAMAGE TO THE EYES FROM DISEASE AND THE SUN'S FIERCE GLARE, A CONSTANT CONCERN IN THE EGYPTIAN DESERT. THE EXTENSIVE SURFACE WEAR FOUND ON THESE STONE PALETTES INDICATES THAT THEY WERE OBJECTS OF FREQUENT USE IN THE DAILY LIFE OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.