



String of beads with cat amulets

Date

date unknown

Medium

Faience

Description

Many nineteenth century tourists, including Burgess, accidentally and purposefully collected reproductions of antiquities. Dealers in antiquities often produced shabtis, amulets, and jewelry with iconographic features not found on their ancient counterparts to entice collectors with objects that appeared unique, attractive, and “authentic.” More specifically, antique jewelry dealers often restrung ancient beads or amulets to better please — or deceive — collectors. This necklace is one of three donated by Burgess that were strung with modern cat amulets and a mix of both modern and ancient faience beads. Egyptians believed that cats had protective powers, and associated cats with the goddess Bastet. However, ancient cat amulets are extremely rare. Cat amulets were rarely oriented sideways, and necklaces seldom contained multiple amulets, as this would have made them difficult or uncomfortable to wear. (Written by Kayley Boddy '22)

Dimensions

Overall: 61 cm (24 in.)