



Tomb of Sety I

Date

late 19th to early 20th century (printed 1992)

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

The tomb of Sety I lies in the Valley of the Kings. In this sculpted detail, the king offers wine to the goddess Hathor. Often called a goddess of love, Hathor can also represent seductive danger. This scene suggests the worship of the eye-lioness-uraeus forms of the "distant goddess," whose myth is perhaps best attested by the "Story of the Departure of Hathor-Tefnut out of Nubia."

Known since the New Kingdom (ca. 1560-1085 BCE), the story tells of the angered eye of the sun, described as the daughter of Ra, a violent goddess in lion form (Tefnut). Retreating into Nubia, she is recalled by Ra, and after she is enticed back to Egypt, she becomes once more the benevolent and happy Hathor. Nonetheless, she requires constant attention, in the form of wine, music, dance, and offerings of desert game, lest she become angry and leave Egypt again.

Dimensions

Sight: 12 x 9 1/2 in. (30.5 x 24.1 cm) Mat: 20 x 16 in. (50.8 x 40.6 cm)