

Mummy Portrait of a Man **The British Museum**

From Hawara, Egypt
Roman Period, AD 100-120



Most mummy portraits that have survived have unfortunately become separated from the mummies to which they were attached. Because of this we rarely know the identities of the subjects.

The subject of this portrait, painted in encaustic on limewood, appears to be a man in his fifties or sixties of strikingly Roman appearance. He is dressed in a tunic with a violet stripe, or *clavus*, and a thick folded mantle. The hair is brushed forward and cropped in the style of court portraits of the Trajanic period (AD 98-117). Pink has been used to highlight his nose and lips, and dark brown to indicate shading and the contours of the face. The portrait gives the impression of age, authority and austerity. These characteristics were very important in Rome, and are here represented in a very Roman manner.

S. Walker and M. Bierbrier, *Ancient faces: mummy portrai-1* (London, The British Museum Press, 1997)

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