

Basic Detail Report



Necklace

Date

2700-30 BC

Medium

Faience, glass, rock crystal, agate

Description

This piece is created from fragments of an Ancient Egyptian necklace. The beads of the necklace are made of various stones, glass and crystals and a substance called faience, a type of very early glazed ceramic. Faience was often used to mimic the look of much more expensive stones. Eleven tubular faience beads alternate with larger amulets, including that of Sobek, the ancient god of the river Nile, shown in the form of a crocodile. Collecting note: how did this piece come to be here in Walworth? The Cuming family, who lived on Walworth Road in the 18th and 19th centuries, were collectors with a desire to create a miniature British Museum in Walworth. Their house was filled to the brim with objects, which they later left to the local authority to create the Cuming Museum. From the early 19th century onwards, Egypt was a target for collectors and traders, desperate to excavate, and profit from the trade in, ancient artefacts, despite it being illegal. This piece, and several others in the Cuming collections, are associated with Giovanni D'Athanasi (1798-1854). He, and many others like him, went into Egypt and hunted for artefacts to sell on the open market. D'Athanasi sold a lot of his "finds" to the British Museum and also to smaller collectors like the Cumings, either directly or indirectly through dealers. The Cumings' notes say this was "found" on a mummy by D'Athanasi.

Dimensions

Object/Work: 32 mm