



Mummy mask - gold leaf cover

This piece is part of a mummy mask. It's made of a very thin material called cartonnage, which is something like papier mache. It's a mixture of plaster and layers of linen fabric, sometimes papyrus but in this case linen. So it may have been moulded using a solid model, then it's been covered in a very thin layer of gold leaf and painted. This allowed the mummy to appear to the ancient Egyptians, like a god because the Egyptians believed the gods and goddesses had skin made of gold an untarnishable metal. And so if you had skin made of gold, you had a chance of living in the afterlife forever.