

Basic Detail Report



Ptolemy VIII at Kom Ombo

Date

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

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

Horus presents an ornate scimitar of victory and palm staffs of long life to Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II and two queens named Cleopatra. This serene religious genre scene belies the often turbulent events of the king's life. Ptolemy VIII was called, among other things, Physkon, "pot-belly," and classical authors described him as physically and morally disgusting. He was apparently corpulent and fond of gauzy garments that openly displayed his bloated and degenerate physique. He reigned initially with his brother Ptolemy VI and Cleopatra II, but he soon chased his brother out of Egypt. Ptolemy VI eventually returned from Rome, and Ptolemy VIII retreated and ruled as king in the Libyan coastal city of Cyrene. On the death of his brother, Ptolemy VIII married Cleopatra II, had his nephew Ptolemy VII killed, and resumed ruling as king in Egypt. This time he was crowned in the traditional pharaonic manner, and married his niece and stepdaughter, Cleopatra III. As a result of this, Cleopatra II chased both Ptolemy VIII and Cleopatra III out of Egypt, and the pair ruled for a while in Cyprus. Ptolemy VIII finally won back the throne and achieved a reconciliation between himself and his queens.

Dimensions

Sight: 9 1/2 x 11 7/8 in. (24.1 x 30.2 cm) Mat: 16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm)