

The great pyramids as art

Countries



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The Great Pyramids of Giza Art is the quality, production, expression, or realm, according to aesthetic principles, of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance. When looking into a piece of art there are five essential questions that should be answered for it to be fully analyzed. What purpose was this piece of art made? What does this piece of art hope to communicate? How was this Piece of art made? What is the composition of this artwork? And finally, what elements should we notice about this work of art?

The Pyramids of Giza are the largest The Great Pyramid is the most significant of the three large pyramids located on the Giza Plateau. The Great Pyramid was also the first pyramid to be built starting in around 2550 BC. This pyramid was built for the pharaoh Khufu, who ruled Egypt from about 2547-2524 BC. Along with the Khufu's Great Pyramid his son, Khafre had one built on the Giza Plateau that at a first glance seems larger than his fathers, and Menkaure, Khufu's grandson, also had one built on the Giza Plateau. The first question asked when looking at these ancient works of art is what purpose was it made for?

In this very early time period Egyptians wanted to preserve the bodies of the dead, and for the better-known tombs were built. The tombs were often a place where offerings could be left to people that had gone home to the gods. These larger pyramids were not only built to prevent robbery, but they also resembled the rays of the suns rays descending to Earth. This relates it to the religious beliefs connected to the cult with the sun god Re. Ancient Egyptians believed that the sun died each night in the West and was re-born the next morning in the East.

This is why the Pyramids are built on the West side of the Nile so that the bodies of the deceased can travel with the sun god through the night and be reborn with him the next morning in the East. The Great Pyramid was built to hold the body and belongings of the pharaoh Khufu, and the one farther South was built for his son, and the one built farthest South was built for his grandson, Menkaure. The main purpose of these three structures was to hold their earthly remains, and to leave a place for them to be worshiped.

The next question we should ask ourselves is what does this piece of art communicate? The Pyramids of Giza communicate many different things. They communicate religious beliefs about life after death, how wealthy and well known the person inside was, and how intelligent and resourceful people of that time were. As we mentioned earlier Ancient Egyptians believed that if they were buried on the West side of the Nile when the sun died to the West they would travel with it, and then be reborn into their eternal life when it rose in the East.

These massive monumental tombs were built on the West side of the Nile so that this could happen. Many belongings were also left in the tombs with the body of the dead so that those items may also be taken to the afterlife with them. The pyramids were not an easy project and took thousands of men to build. The size of these pyramids communicate how wealthy and respectful the people inside them were. Slaves did not build the pyramids; workers did during the time of the year that crops were not being grown so they were out of work.

To feed and dress this many people for months of the year over a long period of time shows how wealthy the person going into the pyramid was.

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You also had to be very well respected for people to join you in building this piece of art. These three pyramids that sit upon the Giza Plateau communicate to its observers that Khufu's family was well respected, rich, and took many luxurious things to the after life with them. The Pyramids of Giza also communicate how intelligent and resourceful the Ancient Egyptians were. The Great Pyramid was built of an estimated two million stone blocks weighing up to two and a half tons apiece.

Khufu's pyramid stood at four hundred and eighty one feet tall, and held the world record for the tallest structure for over three thousand and eight hundred years. Without machines and heavy equipment architecture in this time was very difficult for most parts of the world. For the Ancient Egyptians it was not impossible. Some people today choose to believe that extraterrestrials had to participate in building them, because there is no possible way the Egyptians could have. The size and complexity of these magnificent monuments communicates how intellectual and resourceful the Ancient Egyptians must have been.

After looking at what the purpose of the piece of art is and what it communicates, you should look into how the piece of art was made? No one knows exactly how the Pyramids of Giza were built, but there are many theories that have been put forth starting with the Greek historian Herodotus theory. Herodotus visited Egypt in around 450 B. C. when the pyramids were already two thousand years old. In this theory Herodotus mentions machines, such as cranes were used to lift the huge stones up. This theory was quickly torn down when Diodorus proposed a theory years later.

Close to three hundred years later Diodorus exclaimed that mounds (ramps) were used to slide the pyramids up one block at a time. Diodorus's theory is much more respected because the crane had not been invented at the time the pyramids were being built, and if it had there would be remains of it somewhere. In his theory the ramps ran circles going up around the pyramid, and the block were slide up farther and father and put into place each time. The ramp could be no larger than eight percent or the men would not be able to move the blocks upward. Like all other theories of how the pyramids were built Diodorus's is very faulty to.

For the ramp to have corkscrewed up the pyramid would mean that the corners would have to be finished last. If the corners were finished last how would they plan to keep the pyramid perfectly square. In today's day and time most people tend to lean towards the theory that extraterrestrials must have aided the Ancient Egyptians in building this work of art. We may not know much of how the great Pyramids of Giza were built, but we do know what they are composed of. The Pyramids of Giza were composed of building blocks, an outer shell, and an inner shell.

The building blocks were made of both limestone and granite, and they were quarried locally. The outsides of the pyramids were made almost entirely of limestone. This limestone gave the pyramid an incredibly bright shine and made it seem that much more magnificent. The inner shells of the pyramids were mainly composed of granite, but not just one type of granite. The important chambers for the queens and pharaohs in the pyramids were usually built with a special type of granite know as pink granite. When

looking into this work of art the final question we should ask is, what elements should be noticed about this work?

When looking at the Pyramids of Giza we should notice several different elements. We should look into the formal, symbolic, and social elements of it. The formal elements of this artwork are sometimes overlooked. When looking at this piece of artwork compared to a painting, sculpture, or another type of art some people forget that it even is art. This structure didn't take one person a few hours to complete it took thousands of people many years to complete. Heavy stone was moved long distances without the use of machinery just to have a burial site for a few beings.

The symbolic elements of the Pyramids of Giza are the most significant. The Pyramid is a sign that a very well known, respected individual has been sent onward to the after life, but his presence will never be forgotten. The pyramid is a symbol of the sun's rays shining down to Earth letting Khufu's people know he is still with them. Last but not least the social elements of the pyramids should be noticed. At this point in time in Ancient Egypt bodies were placed in tombs where the spirit of the body went to the afterlife, but the actual body had a place to rest from that point on.

Although the Pyramids of Giza are much larger than others tombs, they are still simply a socially accepted place to be put to rest. All tombs are art because they have to be created, but the Pyramids of Giza are a much larger and complex piece of art. The time put into them, complexity of their structure, and the intellectual people that were put to the test to build this structure give it the elements of art that make it so magnificent. Works Cited Brier, Bob. "How To Build A Pyramid. (Cover Story)." *Archaeology* 60. 3 <https://assignbuster.com/the-great-pyramids-as-art/>

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