

# BULLETIN OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

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FRANCISCO GOYA

Spain, 1746-1828

Drawing for *CAPRICES*, pl. 7: *Ni así la distingue* (Not even with this can he distinguish her)

Pen and sepia ink and chinese ink wash

Lent by the Museo del Prado, Madrid

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## THE TOMB OF HETEP-HERES, THE MOTHER OF CHEOPS

ONE day in February, 1925, a photographer's tripod struck a curious piece of plaster which had been placed in ancient times to seal the entrance to the burial shaft of Queen Hetep-Heres I. The painstaking excavation and over twenty-five years of study which followed have resulted in the publication of Volume II of *A History of the Giza Necropolis* in the monumental series begun by the late Dr. George Reisner, completed and revised by Dr. William Stevenson Smith, Associate Curator of Egyptian Art in the Museum, with the sub-title *The Tomb of Hetep-Heres, the Mother of Cheops: A Study of Egyptian Civilization in the Old Kingdom*.

The finding of the tomb of this queen, the greatest lady of her time, mother of the builder of the Great Pyramid, and ancestress of the royal family of Dynasty IV, was of unique significance, because it has provided us with the only surviving examples of royal burial equipment and furniture of the Old Kingdom. A throne-like chair, a carrying chair, a bed, a canopy frame, and a jewel casket, all encased in gold, decorated with inlaid designs and hieroglyphs, were recovered in fragmentary condition because time had reduced the wooden parts to the consistency of cigar-ash. After intensive study they were reconstructed under the supervision of Dows Dunham, Curator of Egyptian Art in Boston, and may now be seen in the Cairo Museum; exact copies are on display in the Egyptian Department here, along with fragments of an inlaid silver bracelet and examples of pottery. These objects represent the height of artistic achievement of one of the greatest of Egypt's cultural periods and reflect its classic severity and refinement of taste. Furthermore, the inscriptions, seal-impressions, and other material make it possible for the first time to reconstruct both the history of the extraordinary royal family which ruled Egypt as the Fourth Dynasty, and the administration of the funerary services during this great era. The book presents all these remarkable objects and discoveries in their historical and cultural context and thus vividly recreates for us an amazing chapter of the ancient world. As one of the final reports on the findings of the Boston-Harvard Expedition, carried on by Dr. Reisner, Dows Dunham, his successor as Curator of Egyptian Art at the Museum, and Dr. Smith, it provides source material basic for any study of the history and culture of the Old Kingdom, and records an outstanding achievement in archaeological investigation.

All the objects are illustrated in the 148 figures and 55 plates. The book, published by the Harvard University Press for the President and Fellows of Harvard College, is also available at the Museum's Sales Desk. It is priced at \$25.00, with an additional charge of 50¢ in U.S. for postage and handling of mail orders, (\$2.25 foreign).

