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NEW YORK

235 EAST 60TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10022
212.989.9743 / 646.326.0820
WWW.HIXENBAUGH.NET
INFO@HIXENBAUGH.NET

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Egyptian Bronze Shabti: General Wen-Djebau-en-djed

An ancient Egyptian bronze shabti, the mummiform figure wears a tripartite wig, holding adze and hoe, seed bag over the shoulder, with Hieroglyphic inscription, "Major-domo of Khonsu," presumably for General Wen-Djebau-en-djed.



Third Intermediate Period, 21st Dynasty, Reign of Psusennes I,
Ca. 1044 - 993 BC.
Height: 3 3/8 in. (8.5 cm).

Wen-djebau-en-djed was an ancient Egyptian general, high dignitary and high priest during the reign of pharaoh Psusennes I of the 21st Dynasty. He is mainly known for his intact tomb found by Pierre Montet inside the royal necropolis of Tanis (NRT III) in a chamber of Psusennes I's tomb in 1946.Shabtis were first introduced in the Middle Kingdom as substitutes for the the mummy in case it was destroyed. During the Second Intermediate Period inscribed wooden figures called shawabtis (after the Egyptian word for wood, shawab) began to be placed in tombs. During the New Kingdom, shabtis assumed a new role as servant figures for the deceased. They were now depicted with agricultural equipment. By the Third Intermediate Period, the number of shabtis placed in the tomb was set at 401 (365 workers and 36 overseers). During the Late Period the tomb figures became known as ushabtis ('answerers'), these figures represented servants who would magically answer when called upon to perform agricultural duties for the Pharaoh (in the form of Osiris) in the afterlife. Their main function was to ensure the individual's comfort and freedom from daily labor in the next life.

Formerly in the Bodo Bless (1940-2022) collection (formed from 1960 onward), Berlin, Germany, inventory number 132.

inventory number: 9180

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