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Egyptian Limestone Canopic Jar Lids



A set of four ancient Egyptian limestone Canopic Jar lids depicting the four sons of Horus, the guardians of the mummy's organs in the afterlife: Imsety (man), Qebsenuef, (falcon), Hapi (baboon), and Duamutef, (jackal).

Third Intermediate Period, 21st - 22nd Dynasty, Ca. 1070 - 712 BC.
Height of Duamutef: 5 3/4 in. (14.6 cm).

During the mummification process, the liver, stomach, intestines, and lungs had to be removed to allow the corpse's interior to dry. In the Fourth Dynasty, the Egyptians began storing these vital organs in four separate vessels, called canopic jars, and burying them with the mummy. Eighteenth Dynasty craftsmen started making canopic jar lids representing the four sons of Horus, who were charged with preserving the vital organs of the deceased in the Afterlife. The human-headed Imsety protected the liver; the falcon-headed Qebsenuef protected the intestines; the baboon-headed Hapi protected the lungs; and the Jackal-headed Duamutef protected the stomach.

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Formerly in a German private collection; subsequently in a Dutch private collection.

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