

ETERNAL EGYPT:

PROPERTY FROM A NEW YORK PRIVATE COLLECTOR

CHRISTIE'S



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IN PURSUIT OF ANCIENT EGYPT

During the late 1990s, a businessman visited a New York auction house during a pre-sale exhibition of Egyptian and Classical Antiquities. Despite a lifetime of museum visits, in particular the Art Institute of Chicago, he was not aware that private individuals could own museum-quality ancient works of art. By regularly attending auction previews he had the good fortune of befriending influential experts in Egyptology. Through his own studies together with sage advice gained from these friendships, he was inspired to bid with confidence. The result was the creation of the small but fine collection of Egyptian art presented here. Following the acquisition of a major Old Kingdom limestone figure of a man, his research not surprisingly brought him to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, home of the Giza Archives. His connection to the MFA would flourish, culminating in his election to the museum's Board of Overseers.

The strength of the collection is the art of the Old Kingdom, although other periods are represented. Without question the most important work of art is the aforementioned nearly lifesized limestone figure of a man, which was originally in the collection of Vincent and Olga Diniacopoulos, dealers based in Montreal from 1951 until 1967. When the sculpture was previously sold at auction with proceeds to benefit Concordia University in Montreal, virtually nothing was known about its origin. Subsequent research revealed that it was originally excavated in 1926 by George A. Reisner, Director of the Harvard University-MFA Expedition, and that it was part of the funerary ensemble for an important official named Sekhemankhptah. The interior of his mastaba tomb (G 7152) is ornamented with reliefs and

inscriptions identifying his many high-status titles, including Vizier, indicating that he was the most important official at the royal court, second only to the king himself.

Also from the Old Kingdom are very fine tomb reliefs, including one depicting an official in profile to the left that was already on the market in 1972, and a pair of reliefs from the tomb of the official Nyankhnesut that show him wearing priestly garb, his name preserved in hieroglyphs above. A splendid panel straddling the late Old Kingdom into the Middle Kingdom features an especially decorative owl-hieroglyph in sunk relief, part of a large-scale inscription reading "granted by favor (of the king)."

Also from the Diniacopoulos Collection comes a fine New Kingdom relief from the reign of the 19th Dynasty Pharaoh Seti I. The relief depicts a nobleman in profile to the left wearing an elaborate layered wig and a multi-strand beaded necklace, a "collar of honor." From the same period or slightly later comes a fine granodiorite female head with refined features, wearing a voluminous striated wig. The Late Period is represented by an intriguing sculpture of a type known as a block statue. The individual is depicted seated on a plinth with his legs drawn in and his hands resting on his knees. Hieroglyphic inscriptions on the front of the kilt gives us his name, Senbef, and his titles.

Christie's is delighted for the opportunity to present this splendid collection.





SEKHEMANKHPTAH: ANCIENT EGYPT AND MODERN ART

BY WILLIAM PATON

A number of modern artists have been influenced by the Egyptomania that sporadically erupted during the course of the Twentieth Century. The sheer other-ness of Egypt's ancient, pantheistic culture and the abstracted yet realistic forms of ancient Egyptian sculptures and paintings, so perfectly encapsulated in the poetically fragmented figure of Sekhemankhptah, have repeatedly proved an intoxicating combination. Ancient Egypt had long been a source of fascination for Western artists. In Rome, the entrancing effects of Egyptian aesthetics were evidenced by obelisks, sphinxes and even pyramids for millennia. But Napoleon's North African campaign, which resulted in unprecedented access for archaeologists, proved a watershed for Egyptomania. Artists, artisans and architects alike took new cues from pharaohs, hieroglyphs and scarabs. With the discovery and deciphering of the Rosetta Stone, the knowledge of Egypt gained new depths, its culture and even individual characters veering into a new focus.

These discoveries marked a number of prominent artists. Already in the Nineteenth Century, Vincent van Gogh would write enthusiastically about Egyptian art to his brother Theo, wondering how Egyptian artists, "express all these intangible things: goodness, infinite patience, wisdom, serenity, with a few masterly curves and marvellous proportions" (Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo, 9 June 1889, reproduced at vangoghletters.org). The enthusiasm for Egyptian culture reached a frenetic new tempo at the beginning of the Twentieth Century following two particular discoveries. First, the excavations at El-Amarna of the 1910s revealed a hitherto-unknown phase of Egyptian history and style from the monotheistic Akhenaten's reign. In particular, the widely publicized discovery of the workshop of the sculptor Thutmose in 1913 resulted in a wave of vivid, lifelike images being unearthed. Linked both to a named sculptor and a named pharaoh, these objects—including the famous polychrome bust of Akhenaten's wife Nefertiti—were imbued with an astonishing immediacy. Later, in 1922, it was the turn of Akhenaten's son to steal the limelight: following the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen, the world was seized by "Tutmania."

These excavations resulted in a shift in our understanding of Egypt, and also a new vogue, witnessed by Art Deco and Cecil B DeMille alike. However, artists have been inspired in many different ways by Egypt. In Cy Twombly's pictures, the Nile itself served as a muse for the artist, although direct references to Egyptian figures and lore can be glimpsed in many of his works. His sculptures also recall Egyptian funerary objects, not least in their mysterious, hieratic nature. Meanwhile, Bridget Riley's use of colors changed following her trip to Egypt in 1979-80: in her *Ka* and *Ra* paintings, she adopted a deliberately limited palette prompted by the tombs in the Valley of the Kings. For Jean-Michel Basquiat, Egypt provided an ancient African history and heritage. Yet it was also problematic: in *Moses and the Egyptians* of 1982, in the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and the triptych *Untitled (History of the Black People)* of 1983, Basquiat probed



Alberto Giacometti, *Drawings (untitled)*. Kunsthau Zürich. Photo: Kunsthau Zürich. Art © 2018 Alberto Giacometti Estate / Licensed by VAGA and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, NY.

the parallels between ancient Egypt and the scarring legacy of slavery still evident in the United States of America. In the former painting, he explored the biblical role of the Israelites escaping their Egyptian captivity; in the latter, the massed figures in the boats allude to wooden Egyptian models and to the trans-Atlantic slave trade alike.

Another artist influenced by Egyptian culture was Lucian Freud. He had a well-known, well-thumbed copy of J.H. Breasted's *Geschichte Aegyptens* printed by Phaidon in Vienna in 1936. This book would fall open at a double-page spread showing two ancient Egyptian faces, a view immortalised by Freud in paintings and prints alike. "By painting them I didn't have to go very far afield," Freud explained of these pictures, which are oblique portraits, capturing the features of long-dead Egyptians. "I thought about those people a lot. There's nothing like them: they're human before Egyptian in a way" (Freud, quoted in P. Hoban, *Lucian Freud: Eyes Wide Open*, p. 119). Egypt had been a constant backdrop for Freud, not least in the antiquities that decorated the study of his grandfather, the famous psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud.

Ancient Egypt's legacy is conceptual as well as stylistic, as demonstrated by an exhibition held in 1994, when the British Museum invited a number of contemporary artists including Andy Goldsworthy and Marc Quinn to create works to be shown in the Egyptian galleries there. This introduced intriguing conceptual and stylistic dialogues between our age and theirs, discovering shared territories of thought and feeling across the millennia. Similarly, Henry Moore's iconic *King and Queen* was shown among the British Museum's monumental Egyptian sculptures for some time, having been lent by The Tate. The reduced forms, the profound humanity and contrasting sense of mystery shared by these works revealed the continued currency of Egyptian culture. The same characteristics identified by Van

Gogh and so vividly present in the figure of Sekhemankhptah would become crucial springboards for a number of modern sculptors, be it in the distilled forms of Moore or those of his Italian friend and contemporary, Marino Marini, whose own links to Egypt were explored in an exhibition at the Peggy Guggenheim Museum, Venice that opened earlier this year.

Of all the modern sculptors, Alberto Giacometti showed the most profound fascination with the art of Egypt. He had been struck by accounts of the discoveries at Amarna during his childhood, and retained a strong emotional link to ancient Egypt throughout his life. Indeed, among his sketches and studies, Egypt features more than any other source. "Egyptian sculpture has a greatness, a rhythm of line and form, a perfect technique never equalled," he declared. "Everything is carefully considered down to the last detail...and *those heads are so alive...they seem to look and speak*" (Giacometti, quoted in L. Wilson, *Alberto Giacometti: Myth, Magic and the Man*, p. 163).

Egypt wove its way through the tapestry of Giacometti's life. Even the brothel he patronized in Paris was called the Sphinx. An early work he created with his brother for Jean-Michel Frank, a plaster lamp of 1936, was modelled closely on one discovered in Tutankhamen's tomb. Giacometti was also fascinated by miniature amulets and striding statues alike. Visiting the Vatican museums, he claimed that it was not the Greek, Roman or Italian art that won his greatest admiration, but the Egyptian statuary there. His own walking men echo the pose adopted by ancient Egyptian sculptors for their upright figures, as demonstrated by the parallels between his sculptures and the figure of Sekhemankhptah. "An ancient text... talks about sculptures so true that they seem living and that they are able to frighten those who see them," Giacometti stated. "I have never yet succeeded but there is something in my sculpture that comes close" (Giacometti, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 172).





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**AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE STATUE
OF SEKHEMANKHPTAH**

OLD KINGDOM, 5TH-6TH DYNASTY,
CIRCA 2389-2255 B.C.

45 in. (114.3 cm.) high

\$1,000,000-1,500,000

PROVENANCE

Giza, mastaba tomb of Sekhemankhptah (G7152),
excavated by George A. Reisner.

Vincent (1886-1967) and Olga (1906-2000)

Diniacopoulos, Montreal; *Antiquities*, Sotheby's,
in 1951.

A Canadian Private Collection, a portion of the
proceeds intended for the benefit of Concordia
University, Montreal; *Antiquities*, Sotheby's,
New York, 5 June 1999, lot 25.

EXHIBITED

Valleyfield, Quebec, Seminaire de Valleyfield,
Collection Monsieur et Madame D. Vincent & Fils,
May 1954.

Chambly, Quebec, Ecole Gérard Filion, *Exposition
d'art antique*, 1965.

PUBLISHED

V. and O. Diniacopoulos, *Collection Monsieur et
Madame D., Vincent et Fils*, Valleyfield, 1954,
no. 7 or 8.

R. Belle-Isle, *Exposition d'art antique*, Chambly,
1965, p. 5.

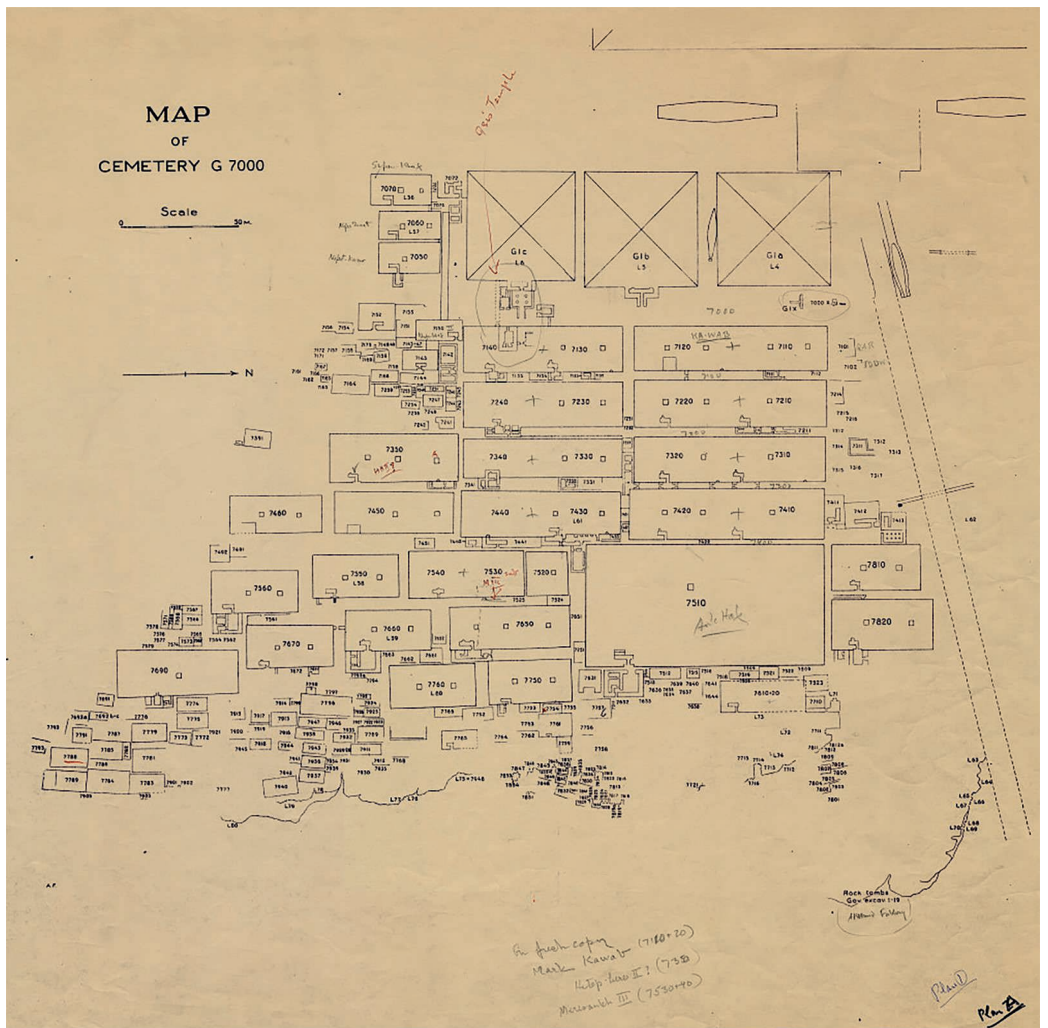
J.E. Francis and G.W.M. Harrison, *Life and Death
in Ancient Egypt: The Diniacopoulos Collection*,
Montreal, 2004, p. 59, fig. 5.6.

J.M. Fossey and J.E. Francis, *The Diniacopoulos
Collection in Quebec: Greek and Roman Antiquities*,
Montreal, 2004, p. 22, fig. 1.4.

Giza. Sekhemankhptah, South end of East face, seated statues flanking chapel in situ, standing statue (restored) North of entrance, looking West. Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition. Giza Archives. Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photograph © 2018 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Giza. Plan of Cemetery G7000. Harvard University-Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition. Giza Archives. Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photograph © 2018 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Sekhemankhptah was an important Egyptian official during the Old Kingdom, circa 2389-2255 B.C. His mastaba tomb (G7152 – see map on p. 9) was located southeast of Khufu's pyramid. It was excavated in 1926 by George A. Reisner, Director of the Harvard University-MFA Expedition and published by him in 1942 (*A History of the Giza Necropolis 1*, pp. 210 [39], 312 [v]). The interior was decorated with raised reliefs showing him, often with his family, overseeing cattle, goats and birds. Associated hieroglyphic texts indicate Sekhemankhptah was Vizier, indicating that he was the most important official at the royal court, second only to the king himself. His other titles included: "Count; Sole companion of Pharaoh; Chief judge, vizier; Staff of the people; Mouth of all the people of Pe; Royal chamberlain; Privy to the secret; Overseer of the scribes of the documents of the king; Scribe of the documents of the king; Overseer of all the works of the king; Overseer of the embalming house of Pharaoh; Overseer of the embalming house." His wife, Bwnefer, was "Real royal daughter," indicating she was the daughter of a Pharaoh. Together they had two children, a son Seshemnefer and a daughter Meritites.

Archival photographs indicate that the limestone figure presented here originally stood in front of the façade of his mastaba tomb to the right of a pair of seated statues of him flanking the entrance (see image on p. 9). The statue is referenced in Reisner's diary entry from January 29, 1927, Vol. 20, p. 667. This is one of only few examples known of private statuary positioned in the open air in front of a tomb rather than within an enclosed interior statue chamber or serdab. None of the three statues have inscriptions.

The sculpture of Sekhemankhptah presented here is important for its near lifesize scale, unusual for a non-royal statue, a further indication of his high status. He is shown standing in the typical striding stance of Egyptian male statuary with his left leg advanced and his arms at his side. He wears a plain kilt and a short wig, which, together with the treatment of the negative space between the arms and body, accords well with other statuary from the 5th Dynasty.

The lack of articulation of the wig, delineation of the kilt pleats or belt, and the overall unpolished state of the surface is an interesting feature of this statue. It is possible that the surface would have been coated in plaster and the details would have been rendered in pigment. It may also be that the present statue was placed in front of the tomb before it received its final sculpted features, surface polish, and painted details, making it one of the only known non-royal unfinished statues. For unfinished statues of the 4th Dynasty King Menkaure, see C. Zivie, p. 60, in Y.J. Markowitz, J.L. Haynes, and R.E. Freed, *Egypt in the Age of the Pyramids*. This statue of

Sekhemankhptah corresponds to Reisner's 5th or 6th stage of completeness where the statue is in a nearly finished state (see G.A. Reisner, *Mycerinus, The Temples of the Third Pyramid at Giza*, pp. 112-118, pls. 62-63).

Sekhemankhptah's mastaba tomb has been discussed in the following publications:

G.A. Reisner, *A History of the Giza Necropolis 1*, Cambridge, 1942, pp. 210, 312.

W.H. Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom*, London, 1946, p. 200.

B. Porter and R.L.B. Moss, revised and augmented by J. Málek, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings 3: Memphis (Abū Rawāsh to Dahshūr)*, 2nd edition, 1974, p. 191.

A. Badawy, *The Tombs of Iteti, Sekhemankh-ptah and Kaemnofert at Giza*, Berkeley, 1976, pp. 15-23, figs. 18-24, pls. 14-23.

K. Lehmann, *Der Serdab in den Privatgräbern des Alten Reiches 1-3.*, (Ph.D. Diss., Universität Heidelberg), 2000, Kat. G247.

V.G. Callender, "A Contribution to the Burial of Women in the Old Kingdom," in F. Coppens, ed., *Abusir and Saqqara in the year 2001. Proceedings of the Symposium (Prague, September 25th-27th, 2001)*, *Archiv Orientalni* 70, No. 3, 2002, p. 303, n. 15.

The statue of Sekhemankhptah was collected by Vincent and Olga Diniacopoulos during the middle of the 20th century. Vincent was born in Constantinople, and later studied at the college Classique. Hélène Olga Nicolas, daughter of a French administrator for the Suez Canal project, was born in Cairo. She studied at the École du Louvre. The couple met in Paris, and prior to Second World War they were already established antiquities dealers, counting the British Museum, the Louvre and The Metropolitan Museum of Art as clients. In 1951 they emigrated to Canada where they established *Ars Classica*, a gallery of Antiquities and European and Canadian paintings on Sherbrooke Street in Montreal. 22 crates of artworks were sent from France, 6 from Syria and 12 from Cairo (p. 20 in J.M. Fossey and J.E. Francis, *The Diniacopoulos Collection in Québec*). It is not known exactly when Diniacopoulos acquired the statue of Sekhemankhptah, but an archival photo from 1955 shows it on display at the Séminaire de Valleyfield near Montreal.



Uncrating works from the Diniacopoulos Collection at the Séminaire de Valleyfield, 1955. Photograph by G. Plouffe, courtesy of Concordia University Records Management and Archives.





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TWO EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE RELIEFS OF NYANKHNESUT
OLD KINGDOM, EARLY 6TH DYNASTY, CIRCA 2323-2291 B.C.

25% in. (64.5 cm.) and 24% in. (61.6 cm.) high

\$120,000-180,000

PROVENANCE

Saqqara, Tomb of Nyankhnesut.
with Dr. Jacob Hirsch (1874-1955), Munich.
Private Collection, England 1930s-1950s.
with K.J. Hewett (1919-1994), London, 1960s-1970s.
Andrew Hess, Wilton Crescent, London.
W. Arnold Meijer, The Netherlands, 1998-2008.
W. Arnold Meijer, The Netherlands; *Antiquities*, Sotheby's, New York, 10
December 2008, lot 12.

EXHIBITED

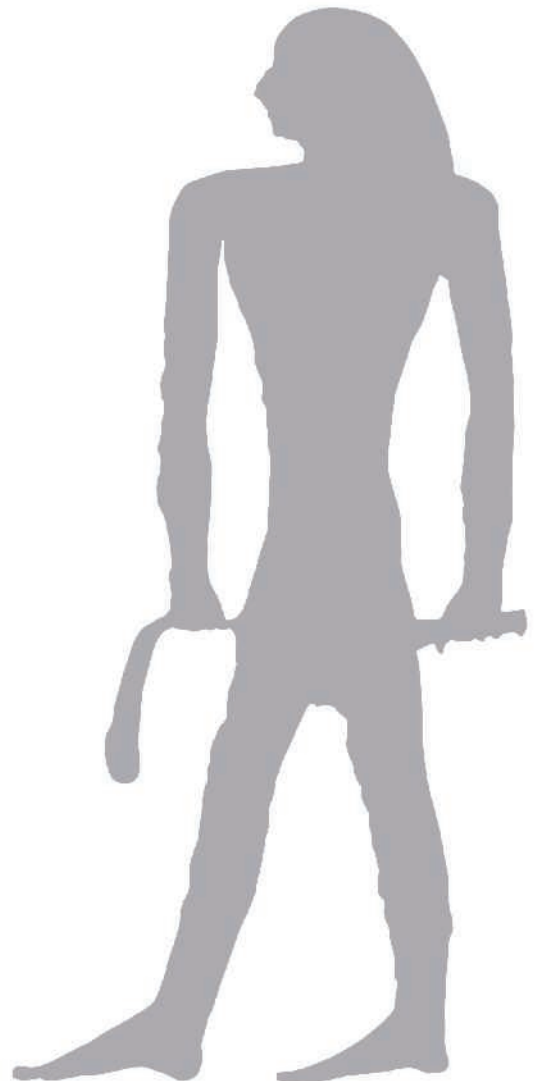
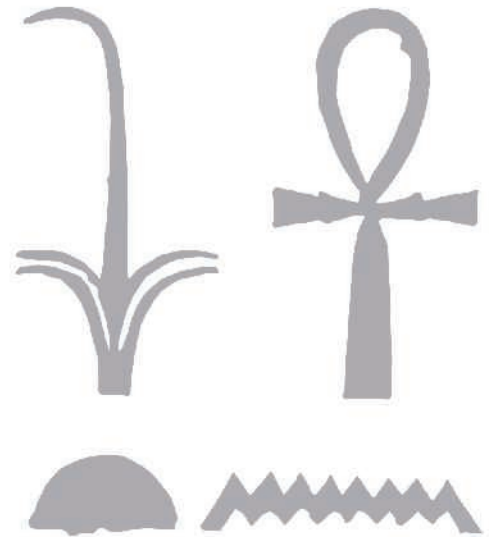
Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Museum, *Objects for Eternity, Egyptian Antiquities
from the W. Arnold Meijer Collection*, 17 November 2006-25 March 2007.

PUBLISHED

C.A.R. Andrews and J. van Dijk, eds., *Objects for Eternity, Egyptian Antiquities
from the W. Arnold Meijer Collection*, Mainz, 2006, pp. 38-41, no. 1.24.

Carved in sharply-delineated sunk relief, these two lower portions of narrow pillars or door jambs derived from Nyankhnesut's tomb at Saqqara. Part of a large group of reliefs from this tomb that entered the market around 1917, these fragments are among those that were originally handled by the dealer Jacob Hirsch. The large figures of Nyankhnesut serve both as images of the deceased man reflecting various aspects of his priestly and ritual functions, and as elaborate and large-scale hieroglyphic determinatives forming the end of the writing of his name, and thus reflect the complex interaction of tomb art and writing during the developed Old Kingdom. Although the precise location of the tomb of Nyankhnesut was lost during the 20th century, in 2000 the tomb was rediscovered by the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities working at Saqqara near the Third Dynasty enclosure wall of King Sekhemkhet, and it is likely that these fragments derive from pillared Room D of the tomb, though their exact architectural setting may not yet be established with certainty.

The figure facing right wears the priestly sash known from representations of lector priests and may be contrasted with the figure facing left, who sports the leopard-skin garment typical of the *sem*-priest. The hands of the two figures are also differentiated by the items they hold; the figure facing right holds an object (perhaps a scepter) that protrudes from the back of his fist, and the figure facing left holds parts of the tail of the leopard skin that he wears. These elements shown in detail in relief are attenuated in sculpture in three dimensions, appearing usually only as round objects of uncertain nature in the hands of seated or standing statues, and their appearance here may usefully be contrasted with the hands of statues (see H. G. Fischer, "An Elusive Shape within the Fisted Hands of Egyptian Statues," *The Metropolitan Museum Journal*, vol. 10, 1975, pp. 9-21.



63

AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE RELIEF

OLD KINGDOM, 6TH DYNASTY, 2360-2195 B.C.

21¼ in. (54 cm.) high

\$150,000-250,000

PROVENANCE

Ägyptische Kunst, Auktion 46, Münzen und Medaillen, Basel, 28 April 1972, lot 23, pl. 6.

with Mathias Komor, New York, 17 March 1979 (inv. no. F.609).

Clarence Day (1927-2009), Memphis.

Antiquities from the Collection of the Late Clarence Day; Sotheby's, New York, 7 December 2010, lot 26.

This large-scale panel likely comes from the right side of a false door from a mastaba tomb at Saqqara. Sculpted in sunk relief, the panel preserves the upper portion of a man in profile to the left. He wears a simple kilt with a triangular apron, the belt knotted at his waist. Diagonally over his shoulders is a distinctive sash, which identifies him as a lector priest. Over the sash is a smooth broad collar that would have been embellished in paint, now lost. The shoulder-length wig of echeloned curls exposes his well-detailed ear. His large outlined eye is framed by a thick eyebrow gently curving above; his full lips are delineated by a thin vermilion line; the philtrum is indicated.

Even in the absence of identifying inscriptions, the large scale and the quality of the carving indicate that the owner was a high-status individual. For a related 6th Dynasty relief compare the figure of Ipi, fig. 69 in D. Arnold, et al., *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids*. See also the head of Ra-wer from his alabaster stela, somewhat earlier in date, no. 144 in Arnold, op. cit.







64

AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE RELIEF FRAGMENT

LATE OLD KINGDOM TO MIDDLE KINGDOM, 6TH-12TH DYNASTY,
2345-1773 B.C.

16½ in. (41.9 cm.) wide

\$100,000-150,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, France.

with Bernard Bruvidou, Paris.

Art Market, North America, acquired from the above, 1976.

Antiquities, Christie's, London, 6 October 2011, lot 41.

This portion of an architectural element (perhaps an architrave) in shallow sunk relief bears the first three hieroglyphic signs reading, "granted by favor/ as a favor [of the king]," the initial part of an inscription type indicating that the object or monument was made or commissioned through royal favor. The phrase is well-documented on statues of seated scribes of Middle Kingdom to New Kingdom date, where it occurs most often either written on the papyrus stretched across the lap of the seated figure, on his kilt, or on the base of the statue. A well-known group of statues from the 12th-13th Dynasties feature this phrase, but the usual material of these statues (granodiorite and other hard stones) is unlike the material or scale of this relief. The formula indicating royal privilege is also attested on prestige objects and in some elite tomb contexts, including some New Kingdom tombs in the Valley of the Queens at Thebes (Luxor). It does not seem to be well attested during the Old Kingdom.

Given the prevalence of this inscriptional type as of the Middle Kingdom and the manner of detailing the owl hieroglyph, dating this relief to the Middle Kingdom, most likely the 12th Dynasty, is likely, although an earlier context is possible (perhaps late Old Kingdom, Dynasty 6, a phase in the arts that significantly inspired Middle Kingdom relief carving). There are parallels with the carving of the owl hieroglyph during the 12th Dynasty, especially in the remains of the pyramid complex of Senwosret III at Dahshur, including the manner of delineating the bird's face and beak, and the horizontal lines forming the wing. This style of detailing the owl sign during most of the Old Kingdom is not in keeping with the carving on this example. The delicate incised lines of the dj-loaf and hs-vase accord well with Middle Kingdom inscriptions as well.

Most likely this fragment derives from a horizontally-oriented architectural element, perhaps the architrave of an elite mastaba-type tomb built in limestone. Sunk relief carving is most often found on tomb exteriors, and this text probably proclaimed royal favor to passers-by. Analysis of the occurrence of this formula indicating royal favor show that it only occurs in connection with high officials and members of the royal family, and we may assume that this fragment comes from a significant tomb chapel. The material of limestone suggests a northern origin, perhaps in proximity to the Memphite court.

For literature on this type of inscription, see G.D. Scott, "The History and Development of the Ancient Egyptian Scribe Statue," (PhD. Diss., Yale University), 1989, p. 193 ff.

65

AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE RELIEF FRAGMENT

NEW KINGDOM, 19TH DYNASTY, REIGN OF SETI I, 1294-1279 B.C.

14¼ in. (36.2 cm.) high

\$80,000-120,000

PROVENANCE

Vincent (1886-1967) and Olga (1906-2000) Diniacopoulos, Montreal, likely brought to Canada in 1951.

A Canadian Private Collection, a portion of the proceeds intended for the benefit of Concordia University, Montreal; *Antiquities*, Sotheby's, New York, 5 June 1999, lot 37.

EXHIBITED

Chambly, Québec, Ecole Gérard Filion, *Exposition d'art antique*, 1965.

Carved in raised relief typical of the elite tombs of the Memphite necropolis (especially Saqqara south), this fragment depicts a high official wearing a lappet wig in four layers. He holds a lotus bouquet in his right hand, and a long narrow staff in his left. It is unclear whether the figure was standing or sitting, but a standing pose is more likely. Around his neck he wears the distinctive *shebyu* collar of gold, a mark of prestige showing royal favor. The relatively small scale of this relief implies that this individual is shown amongst other family members, rather than as a lone large figure in a scene. The details of the banded eye, the modelling of the face, and the shape and type of the lappet wig allow an attribution to the reign of Seti I of the 19th Dynasty. Behind the figure are traces of the end of a vertical line of inscription in raised relief giving the individual's name ending in [...]y, followed by the phrase "justified." Above the figure are a few signs of a horizontal line of inscription in sunk relief.

Several New Kingdom tombs at Saqqara, from which this relief possibly originates, were found by dealers in the 19th century and rediscovered in the late 20th century, and most of which received close study by G. Martin (*Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom from the Memphite Necropolis and Lower Egypt*, 1987). Although several of these tombs of the late 18th and early 19th Dynasties were recorded by the Prussian expedition under Lepsius, a large number of fragments were subsequently dispersed in the private collections and museums of Europe and the United States. For more information, see P. Brand, *The Monuments of Seti I: Epigraphic, Historical, and Art Historical Analysis*, 2000.





66

AN EGYPTIAN GRANODIORITE FEMALE HEAD

LATE NEW KINGDOM TO THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD, 19TH-22ND DYNASTY, 1307-712 B.C.

9 in. (22.8 cm.) high

\$200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Europe, acquired prior to the 1950s.
A European Private Collection; *Antiquities*, Christie's, New York, 10 June 2010, lot 41.

The nearly lifesized scale of this fine female head suggests that it represents a goddess or a prominent individual, but the lack of surviving attributes, divine or royal, makes it nearly impossible to say for sure who is depicted, and either is possible. She is shown wearing a voluminous tripartite wig with striations running nearly horizontally across her forehead and curving behind her well-detailed ears. The large eyes are convex with sharp lower lids, modelled upper lids with extending cosmetic lines and conforming brows above.

For a standing granodiorite figure of the goddess Nephtys in the Louvre wearing a similar striated tripartite wig, earlier in date than that proposed for the head presented here, see no. 19 in E. Delanie, et al., *Aménophis III, le Pharaon-Soleil*. Here the statue is identifiable as a goddess by the attribute held in her left hand and the accompanying inscriptions. Closer in style to the head presented here is the seated statue of Lady Shebensopdet from the Temple of Amun, Karnak, now in Cairo. Shebensopdet was the granddaughter of the 22nd Dynasty King Osorkon II, whose statue was dedicated by her husband Hor (no. 73 in E.R. Russmann, *Egyptian Sculpture*). Her wig rests low on her forehead in similar fashion to our head.





PROPERTY FROM A NEW YORK PRIVATE COLLECTOR

67

AN EGYPTIAN LIMESTONE BLOCK STATUE OF SENBEF

LATE PERIOD, EARLY 26TH DYNASTY, CIRCA 664-600 B.C.

15 in. (38.1 cm.) high

\$50,000-70,000

PROVENANCE

Purportedly from the Coptic cemetery southeast of Giza (per Bernard v. Bothmer's notes, no. 914).

Art Market, Cairo, 1950s.

René Withofs (1919-1997), Brussels, 1974 or prior.

Antiquities, Sotheby's, New York, 10 December 1999, lot 229.

EXHIBITED

Brussels, Banque Bruxelles Lambert, *Du Nil a L'Escaut*, 5 April-9 June 1991, no. 258.

PUBLISHED

C.M. Zivie-Coche, "Bousiris du Letopolite," in *Livre du centenaire: 1880-1980*, Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Cairo, 1980, p. 105.

C.M. Zivie-Coche, *Giza au Premier Millenaire*, Boston, 1991, p. 215E.

This fragmentary block statue of a high official depicts him in squatting pose holding his knees, and wearing the bag wig typical of Saite period officials. The inscriptions identifies him as Senbef, the son of a priest of Osiris, Lord of Ro-Setau named Ptah-di-iau. This information allows us to place the origin of this statue most likely in the Temple of Isis at Giza, where the goddess received cult during the Late Period in the midst of one of the queen's pyramids of the Fourth Dynasty pharaoh Khufu. The inscriptional indications accord with the findspot, said to be the Coptic cemetery of Nazlet el-Batran, which is located to the south of the Giza necropolis, and just north of the tombs and village of the workers. Senbef's father Ptah-di-iau is well attested on finds from the Isis Temple at Giza, and it is likely that Ptah-di-iau was buried inside the precinct of Isis at Giza. Zivie-Coche, who has published detailed studies of these finds including this statue, states "... there is every reason to believe that the statue was placed in the courtyard of the temple."

The five columns of vertical text inscribed on the front of Senbef's kilt are in the form of the "Appeal to the Living," while an additional two columns of the "Saite formula" on the back pillar further give the name of his mother as Seba-it-es(?) or Seneb-Hor-it-es, daughter of the count Pef-tjau-em-awy-Min. Both the formula of the inscription as well as the execution of the statue and its pose are typical of the early Saite period. Based on these criteria, de Meulenaere has concluded that we may say with near certainty that Senbef was a contemporary of Pharaoh Psamtik I.

A quartzite bust of a man also with the name Senbef from the reign of Psamtik I, may depict a different individual as the name was common during the Saite Period (pls. 16-17 in B.V. Bothmer, *Egyptian Sculptures of the Late Period*.



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ANTIQUITIES

WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL 2018

AUCTION

Wednesday 18 April 2018
at 12.00 pm (Lots 1-115)

20 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10020

VIEWING

Friday	13 April	10.00 am - 5.00 pm
Saturday	14 April	10.00 am - 5.00 pm
Sunday	15 April	10.00 am - 5.00 pm
Monday	16 April	10.00 am - 5.00 pm
Tuesday	17 April	10.00 am - 5.00 pm

AUCTIONEER

David Kleiweg de Zwaan (#1365999)

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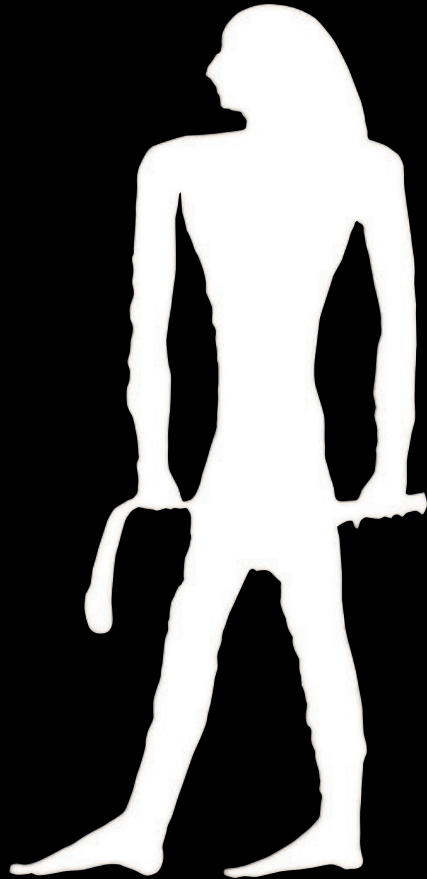
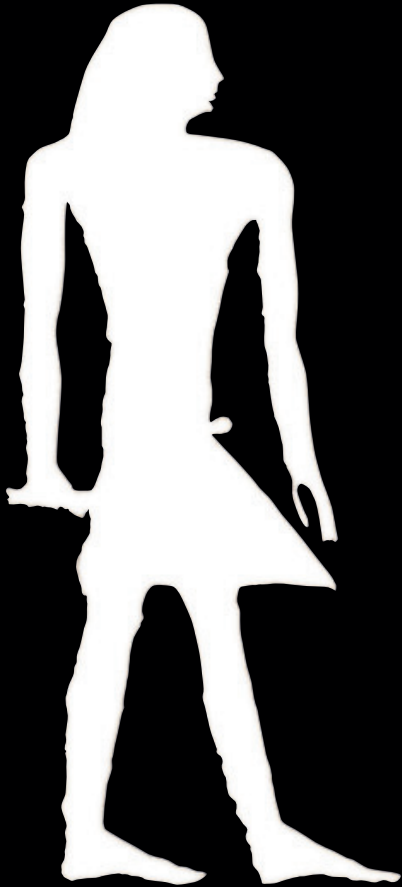
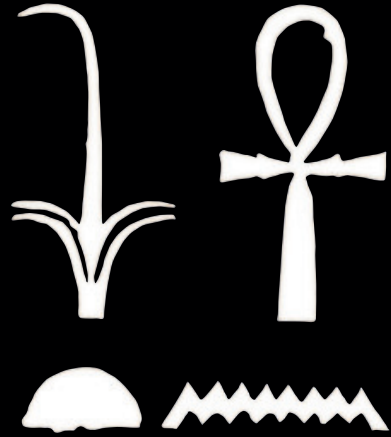
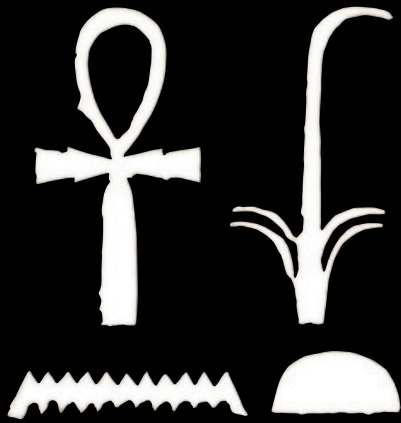
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