Large Chinese Han Dynasty Grey Pottery Dancer Figure, Mingqi Tomb Sculpture



3 000 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Stone

Length : 14 cm

Width : 6 cm

Height : 27.5 cm

Description

A substantial Chinese grey pottery figure of a female dancer, made in the tradition of Han dynasty mingqi tomb sculpture, probably dating to the Western Han dynasty, around the 2nd century BC. The figure is conceived as a dynamic ritual dancer: the torso bends gently, one arm is raised high, and the other is lowered forward, producing a refined sense of movement and ceremony. This iconography relates closely to the famous Han dynasty sleeve dancer, a subject associated with music, courtly performance and the symbolic world of the afterlife.
The object has notable scale and presence. Measuring 27.5 cm in height and weighing 1294 grams, it is a physically substantial piece of early Chinese sculpture. The dense grey earthenware body, pale surviving surface layers, mineral

Dealer

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accretions and aged archaeological texture correspond well with known examples of Han dynasty burial pottery. The modelling is restrained and powerful: the calm face, elongated body, raised arm and robe-like base all reflect the formal language of early imperial Chinese funerary sculpture.

A close and useful museum comparison is the Female Dancer in the Art Institute of Chicago, attributed to China, Western Han dynasty, about the 2nd century BC, made of grey earthenware with slip coating and polychrome pigments. The museum figure preserves more original colour, while the present example has lost most of its painted surface through age and burial wear. Nevertheless, the key features are strongly comparable: grey pottery body, pale surface remains, raised dancing arm, quiet stylised face and flowing robe-like lower form.

Mingqi figures were placed in tombs to accompany the deceased into the next world. Dancers and musicians are among the most evocative of these subjects, representing refinement, movement, ritual and the continuation of cultured life beyond death.

Full scientific certainty with ancient pottery can only be provided by thermoluminescence testing. However, on the basis of material, surface, form, gesture and comparison with museum examples, the probability of this being a Han dynasty Chinese tomb figure is approximately 90%.

Condition is consistent with ancient archaeological pottery: surface wear, rubbing, losses to the original surface layer, minor chips and age-related accretions. The figure remains stable, visually complete and strongly sculptural.

With its elegant silhouette, archaeological surface and historical character, this figure has the qualities expected of a serious collecting object while also offering strong decorative presence for a refined interior.

Dimensions:

Height: 27.5 cm

Width: 14 cm

Depth: 6 cm
Weight: 1294 g
Please study the accompanying photographs carefully as they form an integral part of this description. If you have any questions, we will be happy to answer them. The item will be shipped with full tracking and insurance