Finch & Co



A JAPANESE CARVED STAG'S HORN SHAMANS FLYWHISK HANDLE

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DEPICTING A HUMAN SKULL 'MEMENTO MORI'

19TH CENTURY

SIZE : 14 CM LONG – 5½ LONG

LITERATURE

IN JAPAN, SHINTO, LIKE OTHER TRADITIONAL BELIEF SYSTEMS HAS ITS DARK SIDE. UPON DEATH THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED ARE CONDEMNED TO HELL 'JIGOKU' CONSISTING OF EIGHT REGIONS OF FIRE AND EIGHT OF ICE. JIGOKU IS RULED BY EMMA-HO WHO JUDGES THE SOULS OF MALE SINNERS AND ACCORDING TO THEIR MISDEMEANOUR ASSIGNS THEM TO ONE OF THE SIXTEEN REGIONS. EMMA-HO'S SISTER JUDGES FEMALE TRANSGRESSORS. AS PART OF THE JUDGEMENT PROCESS THE SINNERS PAST SINS ARE REFLECTED BACK AT HIM IN A VAST MIRROR WHERE THE IMAGE OF A HUGE SKULL REIGNS SUPREME.