

Finch & C^o



AN UNUSUAL COLLECTION OF TEN BOTANICAL WAX MODELS OF EXOTIC FRUIT
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CIRCA 1860 – 70
SIZE : 28 CMLONG – 11 INS LONG (MAX)

LITERATURE

BEFORE REFRIGERATION HAD BECOME THE NORM IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE EARLY EUROPEAN COLONISTS TO SEND BACK EXAMPLES OF INDIGENOUS AND POSSIBLY USEFUL PLANT LIFE. COLLECTING AND EXPERIMENTING WITH BOTH NATIVE AND INTRODUCED PLANTS BECAME AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE COLONIAL EMPIRE.

BOTANICALLY ACCURATE WAX MODELS WERE MADE BY SPECIALIST CRAFTSMEN AS A SCIENTIFIC DIDACTIC TOOL, OFTEN RECORDING THE QUALITY OF THE FRUIT AND THE COLOUR SUBTLETIES OF SEASONAL HUES. A PLASTER MOULD WOULD BE Poured AROUND THE ACTUAL FRUIT AND WHEN DRY CUT IN TWO AND THE FRUIT REMOVED. MOLTEN WAX WAS THEN Poured INTO THE TWO PART MOULD AND SHAKEN, WHEN THIS WAS OPENED A HOLLOW FRUIT LIKENESS WAS OBTAINED WHICH WAS SUBSEQUENTLY PAINTED. THE SKILL LAY IN THE COLOURING AND REALISTIC TEXTURING OF THE SURFACE.

COLLECTIONS OF THESE BOTANICAL MODELS HAVE NOW BECOME AN IMPORTANT REFERENCE FOR BIODIVERSITY AND ORGANIC AGRICULTURE.