Finch & Co



AN ENGLISH LIMESTONE MEMENTO MORI CARVING OF A SKULL WEARING LAUREL LEAVES

AN ENGLISH LIMESTONE MEMENTO MORI CARVING OF A SKULL WEARING LAUREL LEAVES
EMBLEMATIC OF THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH
PROBABLY FROM A TOMB OR MEMORIAL
LATE 16TH – EARLY 17TH CENTURY
SIZE: 15 CM HIGH, 16 CM WIDE, 6 CM DEEP – 6 INS HIGH, 6¼ INS WIDE, 2¾ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

'AS YE ME SEE IN SUCH DEGREE SO SHALL YE BE ANOTHER DAY'
AN INSCRIPTION FOUND ON A 16TH CENTURY CHURCH BRASS.
BEFORE THE 20TH CENTURY EUROPEANS REGARDED DEATH AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF LIFE, AND BOTH AS A WARNING SYMBOL AND AN OBJECT FOR MEDITATION, THE SKULL IS THE MOST WIDESPREAD PERSONIFICATION OF DEATH. SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET MEDITATES ALOUD, CONFRONTED BY SKULLS CAST UP BY A GRAVE DIGGER, ON THE POWER OF DEATH TO LEVEL ALL THINGS. DEATH IS THE POWER WHICH REALLY RULES THE WORLD.