Finch & Co



A SCHOLARS OBJECT -A LARGE DARK GREY YING SHIH ROCK WITH PEAKS AND OVERHANGS. DARK GREY LIMESTONE WITH SUBTLE WHITE VEINING. ON 18TH CENTURY

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A LARGE DARK GREY YING SHIH ROCK

WITH PEAKS AND OVERHANGS. DARK GREY LIMESTONE WITH SUBTLE WHITE

VEINING. ON 18TH CENTURY WOOD STAND.

QING DYNASTY, 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 42CM HIGH (INCLUDING BASE)

LITERATURE

WEN ZHGENHENG 1585-1645 COMMENTED IN HIS ZHANGWU ZHI (ON THE THINGS OF THE WORLD) THAT YING STONES WERE FORMED UPSIDE DOWN (AS STALACTITES) AND WERE CUT FROM THEIR MATRIX WITH A SAW AND THEREFORE MING EXAMPLES HAVE FLAT BASES, AS HAS THIS EXAMPLE. DRAMATIC PRESENTATIONS OF THESE ROCKS WITH ARCHING PROJECTIONS AND PRECARIOUS OVERHANGS WERE INTRODUCED IN THE LATE MING PERIOD AND BECAME VERY POPULAR IN THE EARLY QING PERIOD.

YING ROCKS ARE OF FINE-GRAINED LIMESTONE AND ARE TYPICALLY DARK GREY IN COLOUR. THEY CAME FROM YINGDE IN CENTRAL GUANGDONG PROVINCE, ABOUT 75 MILES NORTH OF CANTON (GUANGZHOU). THE ROCKS WERE HARVESTED FROM CAVES

AND TRADITION MAINTAINS THE BEST ONES CAME FROM CAVES FILLED WITH WATER, WHICH GAVE THEM A DARK AND GLOSSY SURFACE AS THIS EXAMPLE HAS. SCHOLARS AND COLLECTORS WOULD PUT GLOSSY YING STONES IN THEIR STUDIO, WHILST THE DRY EXAMPLES WERE RELEGATED TO THE GARDEN.
HIGHLY REGARDED YING ROCKS WERE SECOND ONLY TO THE PRIZED LINGBY ROCKS AND WERE CHERISHED BY THE TRADITIONAL COLLECTORS AND SCHOLARS WHO REGARDED THEM AS SOURCES OF PEACEFUL CONTEMPLATION AND INSPIRATION.
THE OLD WOOD STAND HAS ENGRAVED ON ITS LOTUS PETAL FOOT THE LEGEND 'STRANGE ROCK' AND ON THE FLAT TOP OF THE STAND IS ENGRAVED 'IMMORTAL BEARING' (YING SHIHROCK). IT ALSO STATES THAT THE ROCK AND ITS STAND ENTERED THE COLLECTION OF A CONNOISSEUR ON A WINTER DAY OF THE JEN SHEN CYCLICAL YEAR, CORRESPONDING TO 1812 OR 1872.