Finch & Co



A RARE RUSSIAN CUT AGATE, CRYSTAL, MARBLE AND JADE TROMPE L'OEIL

A RARE RUSSIAN CUT AGATE, CRYSTAL, MARBLE AND JADE TROMPE L'OEIL
OF SUMMER FRUITING BERRIES ON THEIR LEAVES, SET ON A BLACK MARBLE SLAB LAID ON A FACETED GREY JASPER PLINTH
EARLY 19TH CENTURY
SIZE: 20.5CM WIDE, 13CM DEEP, 5.5CM HIGH – 8 INS WIDE, 5 INS DEEP, 2¼ INS HIGH

LITERATURE

THE ENTHUSIASM FOR MINERALOGY IN RUSSIA COMBINED WITH A LOVE OF TABLETOP ORNAMENTS IN THE LATE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURY FUELLED THE CREATION OF MANY STUNNING CUT STONE WORKS OF ART. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SEVERAL IMPERIAL STONE CUTTING MANUFACTURERS IT WAS THE PETERHOF LAPIDARY AND GRINDING MILL THAT SPECIALIZED IN RELATIVELY SMALL PIECES. FOUNDED BY PETER THE GREAT IN 1721 AT THE TIME OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF HIS PETERHOF PALACE AND PARK, THE FACTORY WORKED SOLELY WITH RAW MATERIALS BROUGHT FROM MORE THAN SIX HUNDRED MILES AWAY IN THE URALS AND THE ALTAI MOUNTAINS OF MONGOLIA. THE ALTAI PROBABLY OFFERS THE RICHEST SOURCE IN THE WORLD FOR DECORATIVE COLOURED STONES, WHICH ARE MINED IN LARGE BLOCKS RATHER THAN AS SMALL FRAGMENTS.