Finch & Co



A VANITAS IN THE FORM OF A EUROPEAN MEDIEVAL HUMAN SKULL

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'MEMENTO MORI'

FINE OLD SMOOTH BROWN PATINA

CIRCA 1400 – 1500 AD

SIZE: 14.5CM HIGH, 19CM DEEP, 13CM WIDE – 5¾ INS HIGH, 7½ INS DEEP, 5 INS WIDE

LITERATURE

'VANITE OF VANITIES Â€¦.. ALL IS VANITIE'. THE SKULL WAS AN ADMONITION TO MAN TO REFLECT ON HIS OWN END IN A TRANSIENT WORLD AND THUS BECOME LIKE THE HERMIT ST JEROME AND THE PENITENT SAINT MARY MAGDALENE BY MEDITATING ON THE SKULL AS AN EXERCISE IN CHRISTIAN REMORSE AND PENITENCE. THIS SKULL WAS PROBABLY USED AS AN OBJECT OF DEVOTIONAL CONTEMPLATION, PLACED ON A DESK OR IN A WRITING CABINET IN A STUDY.