Finch & Co



ENGLISH MEDIEVAL CARVED RED SANDSTONE HYBRID GROTESQUE DEPICTING A BESTIAL

AN ENGLISH MEDIEVAL CARVED RED SANDSTONE HYBRID GROTESQUE DEPICTING A BESTIAL DEMON

THE STARRING EYE SOCKETS FILLED WITH TRACES OF LEAD

CIRCA 15TH CENTURY

SIZE: 40CM HIGH – 15¾ INS HIGH (APPROX)

LITERATURE

THE OVERALL IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE HUGE OVAL BULGING EYES, DEVILS HORNS, EARS, SHAGGY MANE, BULBOUS NOSE, AND FIERCE EXPRESSION OF THIS CHURCH GROTESQUE IS AN EXTREMELY STARTLING ONE. ALL OF THESE SECULAR CARVINGS WERE PROBABLY INTENDED AS A DEFENCE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL AND WHEN POSITIONED ON A BUILDING HAD AN APOTROPAIC FUNCTION.

RESEMBLING A DEMONIC BULL, THE IMAGE OF THIS GROTESQUE REFERS BACK TO THE ANCIENT PAGAN GODS BACCHUS OR DIONYSUS WHOSE REPRESENTATIVE WAS A BULL WITH A HUMAN FACE. THE SYMBOL OF THE BULL ALSO ALLUDES TO THE BELIEFS IN HIS POWER AND HIS ROLE AS A LUNAR AND SOLAR GOD.