Finch & Co



PRUSSIAN MARQUETRY INLAID MAHOGANY TURNER'S TOOL CHEST

A SUPERB AND UNIQUE PRUSSIAN MARQUETRY INLAID MAHOGANY TURNER'S TOOL CHEST
THE INNER LID INLAID WITH NUMEROUS WOOD WORKING AND TURNING TOOLS, A MOTHER OF PEARL CROWN AND TWO PORTRAITS OF THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN AND HIS APPRENTICE. A PANEL INSCRIBED WITH THE NAME 'F W BALLACK' AND THE DATE 1845. A FLAG FLYING FROM THE TOP OF A TURNED GOBLET INSCRIBED 'MEWE'
THE LID WITH A SECRET HIDDEN SLIDING COMPARTMENT REVEALING A LARGE KEY WHICH OPENS THE CHEST. THE WHOLE OF THE TOP LID DESIGNED BACK TO FRONT IN ORDER TO PUZZLE THE UNINITIATED AND TO HIDE THE MECHANISM OF ENTRY
IN FINE CONDITION
CIRCA 1845
SIZE: 37CM HIGH, 55.5CM WIDE, 36.5CM DEEP – 14½ INS HIGH, 21¾ INS WIDE, 14¼ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

GERMAN WOOD AND IVORY TURNERS FROM THE RENAISSANCE ONWARDS WERE HIGHLY PAID COURT ARTISTS BELONGING TO GUILDS THAT PROTECTED THEIR TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS. THEY TRANSFORMED EXOTIC MATERIALS SUCH AS IVORY, RHINOCEROS HORN AND RARE WOODS INTO VIRTUOSO ARTWORKS. THESE OBJECTS WERE CREATED WITH SPECIFICALLY INVENTED TURNING TOOLS AND MACHINES, WHICH REVEAL A PROFOUND KNOWLEDGE OF GEOMETRY AND MATHEMATICS COMBINED WITH MASTERFUL PRECISION.
MANY OF THE CROWNED PRINCES OF EUROPE BECAME DEVOTED TURNERS UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF 'MASTER INSTRUCTORS'. IN 1578 GEORG WECKER BECAME DRESDEN 'COURT TURNER FOR LIFE' TO THE ELECTOR AUGUST THE STRONG OF SAXONY. ORIGINALLY A PRINCELY PASTIME FOR 'DRECHSELNDER SOUVERÍ¤N' THE ART OF TURNING GRADUALLY DEVELOPED INTO A SPECIAL FIELD FOR COLLECTORS AND CONNOISSEURS.