Finch & Co



PAIR OF FRENCH DIEPPE FINELY CARVED IVORY MINIATURE FIGURES OF HUNCHBACKED DWARF COURT JESTERS

A PAIR OF FRENCH DIEPPE FINELY CARVED IVORY MINIATURE FIGURES OF HUNCHBACKED DWARF COURT JESTERS ONE MOCKING THE OTHER, BOTH WEARING SETS OF SILVER SPURS TO THEIR BOOTS. PROBABLY COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE CHARACTERS AFTER ETCHINGS BY JACQUES CALLOT

LATE 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 14.5CM HIGH AND 15.5CM HIGH – 5¾ INS HIGH AND 6 INS HIGH

LITERATURE

THE ORIGINS OF THE ITALIAN COMEDY ARE LOST IN THE MISTS OF TIME, BUT ACTOR-MIMERS PORTRAYING THESE CHARACTERS WERE TRAVELLING ALL OVER EUROPE IN THE 16TH CENTURY, AND FROM THIS SOURCE THE ENGLISH TRADITION OF PANTOMIME AND PUNCH AND JUDY SHOWS DEVELOPED. IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES, THE PLAYS WERE IMPROMPTU AFFAIRS AND IN MANY CASES THE ACTORS WERE GIVEN VERY BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS, JUST THE OUTLINE OF THE PLOT, AND THEN LEFT TO CALL ON THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE AND NATURAL DRAMATIC TALENT TO PLAY OUT MEMORISED MONOLOGUES, COARSE JOKES AND ACROBATIC TRICKS.