Finch & Co



COLLECTION OF SIXTEEN JAPANESE BACHI

A FINE COLLECTION OF SIXTEEN JAPANESE BACHI VARIOUSLY CARVED OF WHALEBONE, IVORY, TORTOISESHELL, BUFFALO HORN, ROSEWOOD AND CHERRYWOOD, ONE WITH INLAYS OF LEAD TO THE SIDE
ALL WITH OLD PATINATION
19TH CENTURY
SIZES: 25.5CM HIGH – 10 INS HIGH (MAX) /19CM HIGH – 7½ INS HIGH (MIN)
SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO.17, ITEM NO.67, FOR ANOTHER COLLECTION

LITERATURE

JAPANESE BACHI ARE REFINED PLECTRUMS THAT HAVE BEEN USED TO PLAY A TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CALLED THE SHAMISEN SINCE THE 16TH CENTURY. A FAVOURITE OF GEISHA, IT IS A THREE SILK STRINGED INSTRUMENT THAT RESEMBLES IN CONSTRUCTION THE AMERICAN BANJO. THE TYPE OF SKIN STRETCHED ACROSS THE HOLLOW BODY DEPENDS ON THE GENRE OF MUSIC AND THE LEVEL OF SKILL OF THE PLAYER. STUDENTS OFTEN USE DOG SKIN AS IT IS CHEAPER TO REPLACE AND MORE DURABLE. PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS USE TAUT CAT SKIN, WHICH IS MORE DELICATE AND EXPENSIVE, AND IS SAID TO PRODUCE THE BEST AND MOST WONDERFUL SOUND. ON SOME OF THE OLD AND VALUABLE SHAMISEN THE POSITION OF THE CAT'S NIPPLES CAN STILL BE SEEN.
BACHI DIFFER IN SIZE, SHAPE AND MATERIAL ACCORDING TO WHICH TYPE OF SHAMISEN IS TO BE PLAYED. GIDAYU SHAMISEN REQUIRES THE HEAVIEST AND THICKEST BACHI OFTEN MADE OF WOOD OR BUFFALO HORN, WHILST THE BACHI USED FOR TSUGARU SHAMISEN IS THE SMALLEST AND ALWAYS TIPPED WITH TORTOISESHELL.