Finch & Co



FRENCH FINELY CARVED IVORY SNUFF BOX

A FRENCH FINELY CARVED IVORY SNUFF BOX DECORATED WITH A BASKET OF FRUIT AND FLOWERS ON A TRIPOD STAND WITH STEMS OF POMEGRANATES, ARTICHOKES AND PEARS TRAILING FROM EACH CORNER

LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 1CM HIGH, 8CM WIDE, 5CM DEEP - ½ INS HIGH, 3 INS WIDE, 2 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

DURING THE LATE 17TH AND EARLY 18TH CENTURIES SNUFF, WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY TREATED TOBACCO LEAF, ARRIVED FROM THE NEW WORLD IN MOIST BLOCKS TIED WITH STRING. TO CONVERT IT INTO POWDER IT WAS RUBBED ALONG A RASP OF PERFORATED METAL AND THE RESULTING FINE GRAINS WERE KEPT IN A TIGHT CLOSE FITTING BOX TO KEEP IT POTENT, FRESH AND AROMATIC.

LOUIS XIV HAD AN AVERSION TO THE TAKING OF SNUFF SO MANY OF THE SNUFF BOXES PRODUCED AT THE TIME WERE DISCREET RATHER THAN SHOWY, ENABLING THE NOBILITY WHO LIVED AT VERSAILLES TO INDULGE IN SNUFF TAKING SECRETLY SO AVOIDING ROYAL DISPLEASURE.