Finch & Co



SOUTH GERMAN CARVED IVORY MEMENTO MORI OF A HUMAN SKULL

A LARGE CURIOUS SOUTH GERMAN CARVED IVORY MEMENTO MORI OF A HUMAN SKULL WITH LOWER JAW DISPLAYING LOST TEETH AND CROOKED GRIN

LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 7CM HIGH, 5CM WIDE, 9CM DEEP – 2¾ INS HIGH, 2 INS WIDE, 3½ INS DEEP

SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO. 13, ITEM NOS. 105, AND 106 FOR OTHER SMALLER EXAMPLES

LITERATURE

KNOWN AS THE 'DEATHS HEAD' CARVED IVORIES OF THE HUMAN SKULL WERE POPULAR IN BAROQUE GERMANY AS CONTEMPLATIVE REMINDERS OF THE TRANSIENCE OF EARTHLY LIFE. HOWEVER, THERE WAS ALSO A RISING SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN HUMAN ANATOMY, SO A CAREFULLY CARVED IVORY MODEL OF A SKULL BECAME A 'MUST HAVE' FOR A COLLECTORS KUNSTKAMMER.