

Finch & C^o



WESTERN DESERT ABORIGINAL SACRED CHURINGA

AN AUSTRALIAN WESTERN DESERT ABORIGINAL SACRED CHURINGA THE WOOD ETCHED WITH AN ABSTRACT DESIGN

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 61CM HIGH, 4.5CM WIDE – 24 INS HIGH, 1¾ INS WIDE

66.5CM HIGH – 26¼ INS HIGH (INCLUDING STAND)

LITERATURE

'CHURINGA'S' ARE MANUFACTURED WITH GREAT CARE AND PATIENCE AND BEAUTIFUL HIGHLY CONVENTIONALISED DESIGNS WERE ENGRAVED ON THEM BY MEANS OF A POSSUM'S TOOTH. THEY ARE SACRED OBJECTS WHICH REPRESENT THE ANCESTRAL AND THE INDIVIDUAL SPIRIT OF THE OWNER. THEY CAN ONLY BE SEEN BY INITIATED MEN DURING THE TIME OF A CEREMONY. AT OTHER TIMES THEY ARE KEPT CAREFULLY WRAPPED IN BARK OR SKINS AND HIDDEN IN SACRED PLACES. WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE NOT ALLOWED TO SEE THEM AND THE BREAKING OF THIS RULE WAS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH OR BLINDING. CHURINGA'S EXIST IN DIFFERENT FORMS IN MANY PARTS OF AUSTRALIA, THOSE FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA ARE MADE FROM WOOD AND VARY CONSIDERABLY IN SIZE, SOME OF THEM REACHING A LENGTH OF SEVENTEEN FEET.