Finch & Co

THREE BYZANTINE BRONZE DOUBLE SIDED PECTORAL RELIQUARY CROSSES

THREE BYZANTINE BRONZE DOUBLE SIDED PECTORAL RELIQUARY CROSSES ONCE CONTAINING RELICS OF THE TRUE CROSS

10TH - 12TH CENTURY

A. SOLD - ENGRAVED WITH A FIGURE OF SAINT GEORGE 'GEORGIOS' AND TO THE REVERSE THE VIRGIN WITH CHRIST CHILD AND SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ABOVE HER HEAD A GREEK INSCRIPTION 'MATER THEOS' MOTHER OF GOD

SIZE: SOLD - 13.5CM HIGH, 6CM WIDE, 1CM DEEP - 5¼ INS HIGH, 2¼ INS WIDE, ¼ INS DEEP / 16CM HIGH - 6¼ INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

B. ENGRAVED WITH TWO SAINTS

SIZE: 9CM HIGH, 4CM WIDE, 1CM DEEP - 3½ INS HIGH, 1½ INS WIDE, ¼ INS DEEP / 11CM HIGH - 4¼ INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

C. SOLD - ENGRAVED WITH A FIGURE OF THE VIRGIN ‘MATER THEOS’ AND WITH A FIGURE OF ST GEORGE TO THE REVERSE ‘GEORGIOS’

SIZE: SOLD - 8CM HIGH, 4.5CM WIDE, 1CM DEEP - 3 INS HIGH, 1¾ INS WIDE, ¼ INS DEEP / 10.5CM HIGH - 4 INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

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LITERATURE

THESE EARLY BRONZE PILGRIMAGE CROSSES ARE ENGRAVED IN AN ABSTRACT LINEAR STYLE WITH EXPLICIT ICONOGRAPHY. THEY WERE MADE TO HOUSE A RELIQUARY ACQUIRED BY A PILGRIM ON HIS ARDUOUS JOURNEY TO THE HOLY LAND TO VENERATE THE SITE OF THE CRUCIFIXION AND OTHER HOLY PLACES. THE PILGRIMS WANTED BOTH A MEMENTO AND AN OBJECT REPRESENTING CHRIST'S PASSION. THESE RELIQUARY CROSSES WERE PROBABLY MADE TO ORDER FROM A STOCK OF INTERCESSORY HOLY FIGURES AND SAINTS FOLLOWING A PATTERN IN SIZE, IMAGERY AND CONSTRUCTION, BUT REFLECTING THE PILGRIM'S SPECIFIC DEVOTIONAL PREDILECTIONS. THE PENDANT CROSS WAS THEN PROUDLY WORN BOTH AS AN AMULET AND TALISMANIC DEVICE FOR PROTECTION, AND AS A SCARED FOCUS FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION.

PROVENANCE

PRIVATE COLLECTION DUSSELDORF, GERMANY

ACQUIRED EARLY 20TH CENTURY