

# Finch & C<sup>o</sup>



## TIBETAN PRAYER BOARD PAINTED WITH AN IMAGE OF THE POWERFUL WRATHFUL DEITY MAHAKALA

A RARE TIBETAN PRAYER BOARD PAINTED WITH AN IMAGE OF THE POWERFUL WRATHFUL DEITY MAHAKALA 'THE GREAT POWER OF TIME' WEARING EARRINGS OF TWO SEVERED HEADS A CROWN OF FIVE SKULLS A GARLAND OF SEVERED HEADS AROUND HIS MIDDLE HOLDING IN HIS FOUR HANDS A 'VAJRA' A RITUAL SKULL TOPPED SCEPTRE 'KHATVANGA' A LOTUS BUD AND A SWORD HE STANDS ON TWO DEVILS FLOATING AGAINST A BACKDROP OF DANCING FIERY FLAMES

THE REVERSE OF THE BOARD INSCRIBED WITH THE MANTRA 'OM MANI PADME HŪM' AND WITH PRAYERS IN BLACK SCRIPT

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 51CM HIGH, 22CM WIDE, 1CM DEEP - 20 INS HIGH, 8¾ INS WIDE, ¼ INS DEEP / 55CM HIGH - 21¾ INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

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#### **LITERATURE**

TIBETANS USE MANTRAS IN MANY WAYS. A MANTRA CONSISTS OF ONE OR MORE SYLLABLES WHICH ARE HELD TO CONDENSE AND PRECIPITATE ENERGIES EITHER FOR RITUAL OR MAGICAL PURPOSES 'OM MANI PADME HŪM' IS THE BEST KNOWN, BUT THERE ARE MANY OTHERS EACH WITH A DIFFERENT EFFECT. MANTRAS ONLY WORK IF LEARNED AND UTTERED 'PROPERLY' WITH TOTAL CONCENTRATION OF THAT MIND FROM WHICH ALL FORCES ORIGINATE. UTTERING THEM SO CAN EVEN AFFECT ONE'S KARMA. MANY TIBETANS RECITE THEIR GREAT BASIC MANTRA 'OM MANI PADME HŪM' ALMOST CONTINUOUSLY. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO HELP CONSOLIDATE ITS BENEFICIAL EFFECT. THEY ENLIST THE MIND TO HELP REPEAT IT BY INSCRIBING IT ON PRAYER FLAGS. THEY ENDLESSLY TURN PRAYER WHEELS OF ALL SIZES. THEY INCISE IT ON ROCKS BY THE ROADSIDE, PAINT IT AROUND THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF A CIRCLE, WRITE IT ON PAPER-SLIPS, WEAR IT IN AMULETIC CHAIN BOXES HUNG ROUND THEIR NECKS, AND INSCRIBE IT ON PRAYER BOARDS SUCH AS THIS.

#### **PROVENANCE**

EX COLLECTION MARION H. DUNCAN MISSIONARY, ARMY INTELLIGENCE OFFICER AND AUTHOR OF MANY BOOKS ON TIBET ITS CUSTOMS AND PEOPLE. HE SPENT 15 YEARS IN TIBET AND WROTE HER FIRST BOOK 'THE MOUNTAIN OF SILVER SNOW' PUBLISHED IN 1929. HE COLLECTED THIS PRAYER BOARD IN THE EARLY 1920'S

EX COLLECTION MAJOR R.E. DONNELLY

THENCE BY DESCENT