Finch & Co



COLLECTION MEMENTO MORI SKULLS

A. A SOUTH GERMAN CARVED AND POLYCHROMED LIME-WOOD 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULL WITH CURLING SNAKE PROBABLY FROM AN ALTARPIECE

LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 18CM HIGH, 14CM WIDE, 13.5CM DEEP - 7 INS HIGH, 5½ INS WIDE, 5¼ INS DEEP / 30CM HIGH - 11¾ INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

SOLD

B. A SOUTH GERMAN CARVED 'MEMENTO MORI' PEAR-WOOD SKULL WITH PROMINENT TEETH PROBABLY FROM A DEVOTIONAL CRUCIFIX

LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 5CM HIGH, 4.5CM WIDE, 5CM DEEP - 2 INS HIGH, 1¾ INS WIDE, 2 INS DEEP

SOLD

C. A GERMAN CARVED AND POLYCHROMED LIME-WOOD SMALL 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULL

18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 3.5CM HIGH, 3.5CM WIDE, 4CM DEEP - 1¼ HIGH, 1¼ INS WIDE, 1½ INS DEEP

D. A GERMAN CARVED BOXWOOD 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULL PROBABLY FROM A DEVOTIONAL CRUCIFIX

LATE 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 4CM HIGH, 3CM WIDE, 4CM DEEP - 1½ INS HIGH, 1 INS WIDE, 1½ INS DEEP

SOLD

E. AN UNUSUAL SOUTH GERMAN CARVED BOXWOOD ROSARY BEAD DEPICTING A SKULL WITH A DEFORMED NOSE

17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 2.5CM HIGH, 3CM WIDE, 3.5CM DEEP - 1 INS HIGH, 1 INS WIDE, 1¼ INS DEEP

F. A GERMAN 'MEMENTO MORI' CARVED IVORY ROSARY BEAD DEPICTING AN OVER-LARGE SKULL

MID 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 3CM HIGH, 3.5CM WIDE, 3.5CM DEEP - 1 INS HIGH, 1¼ INS WIDE, 1¼ INS DEEP

SOLD

G. AN ENGLISH FINELY CARVED ANATOMICAL MODEL OF A HUMAN SKULL A 'VANITAS'

18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 4.5CM HIGH, 4CM WIDE, 3.5CM DEEP - 1¾ INS HIGH, 1½ INS WIDE, 1¼ INS DEEP

SOLD

H. A GERMAN MINIATURE CARVED IVORY 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULL

LATE 17TH – EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 1.2CM HIGH, 1.5CM WIDE, 2CM DEEP - ½ HIGH, ½ INS WIDE, ¾ INS DEEP

SOLD

I. A COLLECTION OF THREE 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULLS: A SPANISH SMALL CARVED BONE JANUS HEAD ROSARY BEAD DEPICTING CHRIST AND TO THE REVERSE A SKULL

A GERMAN CARVED IVORY MINIATURE ROSARY BEAD IN FORM OF A SKULL

A GERMAN CARVED IVORY 'MEMENTO MORI' SKULL

18TH CENTURY

SIZES: 1.5CM HIGH - ½ INS HIGH (EACH)

SOLD

LITERATURE

DEATH, FOR MOST PEOPLE BEFORE THE 19TH CENTURY, WAS A MAJOR PREOCCUPATION. LIFE EXPECTANCY WAS UNDER 40 AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TAUGHT THAT AFTER DYING THE SOUL FACED A TERRIFYING AND UNCERTAIN ONWARD JOURNEY. IMAGES OF SKULLS WERE A REMINDER OF YOUR OWN MORTALITY, A REMINDER TO LIVE A GOOD AND PIOUS LIFE, TO PRAY FOR YOUR SOUL IN ETERNITY. A 'MEMENTO MORI' THAT DEATH COMES FOR US ALL. AS THE LATIN INSCRIPTION ON ARCHBISHOP CHICELE'S TOMB STATES, 'NOW I AM CAST DOWN: AND TURNED INTO FOOD FOR WORMS'.

PROVENANCE

EX ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION