

Finch & C^o



ITALIAN TUSCAN RENAISSANCE CARVED MARBLE GROTESQUE MASK DEPICTING SILENUS

AN ITALIAN TUSCAN RENAISSANCE CARVED MARBLE GROTESQUE MASK DEPICTING SILENUS THE GOD OF WINE WITH THE EARS OF A DONKEY OPEN MOUTH AND FLABBY CHEEKS

PERHAPS AN ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENT SUCH AS A KEY-STONE

16TH CENTURY

SIZE: 19.5CM HIGH, 21CM WIDE, 4.5CM DEEP - 7¾ INS HIGH, 8¼ INS WIDE, 1¾ INS DEEP / 22CM HIGH - 8¾ INS HIGH (WITH BASE)

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LITERATURE

SILENUS WAS A PRIMITIVE DEITY OF THE WOODLAND AND THE FOUNTAINS WHOM PEOPLE TRIED TO CATCH IN ORDER TO MAKE HIM PROPHECY AND SING TO THEM. THE SON OF HERMÉS AND A NYMPH, OR OF PAN, AS THE OLDEST OF THE SATYRS HE WAS ADDED TO THE TRAIN OF DIONYSUS AND WAS REGARDED AS HIS TEACHER, TRAINER AND CONSTANT COMPANION. HE IS SAID TO HAVE PROMPTED THE GOD TO INVENT THE CULTIVATION OF THE VINE AND THE KEEPING OF BEES. HE IS DESCRIBED AS A LITTLE OLD MAN, POT BELLIED WITH A BALD HEAD, SNUB NOSE, LARGE DONKEY OR ASS'S EARS, AND WITH HIS WHOLE BODY VERY HAIRY. HE WAS USUALLY DRUNK AND HAD TO BE SUPPORTED BY HIS SATYRS

OR BY HIS DONKEY. WHEN INTOXICATED SILENUS WAS SAID TO POSSESS SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE POWER OF PROPHECY.

PROVENANCE

EX CANADIAN COLLECTION OF THE LATE MAJOR MOORE (1919 - 2006) WRITER ACTOR AND PRODUCER

THENCE BY DESCENT