Finch & Co



INDO-PORTUGUESE GOA FINELY CARVED IVORY OF THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST

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HIS EYES CLOSED HEAD RESTING ON HIS CHEST HAIR FALLING TO ONE SIDE HIS MOUTH SHOWN OPEN IN HIS CALL TO GOD

SMOOTH SILKY CREAMY WHITE PATINA WITH AGE CRACKS

LATE 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 32CM HIGH, 21CM WIDE - 12½ INS HIGH, 8¼ INS WIDE

BELGIUM CITES: 2025/BE01026/CE

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LITERATURE

AFTER THE FALL OF SRI LANKA TO THE BRITISH IN 1657 THE PORTUGUESE DEPARTED AND ESTABLISHED A LARGER TRADING PRESENCE IN GOA. THE TOWN HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MAGNET FOR CRAFTSMEN FROM ALL OVER INDIA EVEN BEFORE THE SINHALESE CAME TO CONTINUE IN THE SERVICE OF THE PORTUGUESE. THE PRODUCTION OF CHRISTIAN IVORIES CONTINUED AS IT HAD DONE BEFORE IN SRI LANKA, BUT NOW GOA BECAME A MAJOR PRODUCER OF LUXURY GOODS AND A COMMERCIAL CENTRE. WITH THE EVOLUTION OF SEA ROUTES IT DEVELOPED INTO A WORLDWIDE TRADING HUB WITH LARGE NUMBERS OF EUROPEAN MERCHANTS SPANISH, FRENCH, GERMAN AND FLEMISH, BESIDE THE PORTUGUESE SETTLING THERE.

THE PRESENCE OF THE BODY OF SAINT FRANCES XAVIER IN GOA SINCE 1554 AND THE CULT DEVELOPED BY THE JESUITS SURROUNDING IT, ESTABLISHED AN IMPORTANT MARKET FOR THE CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN RELIGIOUS IMAGERY. DEVOTIONAL CRUCIFIX WERE APPARENTLY DIFFICULT FOR THE LOCAL INDIAN ARTISTS AS THEY WERE UNACCUSTOMED TO SUCH A REALISTIC REPRESENTATION OF DEATH GIVEN THEIR BELIEF IN ITS TRANSITORY NATURE. CHRISTIAN IVORIES WENT ON TO BE PRODUCED IN THE PORTUGUESE DIRECTED WORKSHOPS OF GOA FOR OVER 250 YEARS SUPPLYING THE DIVERSE CHURCHES OF THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE BELGIAN COLLECTION

EX FINCH AND CO CATALOGUE NUMBER 34, ITEM NUMBER 43

EX PRIVATE IRISH COLLECTION

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