Finch & Co



A CHINESE LACQUERED WOOD PIGEON WHISTLE

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WOOD LACQUER BONE AND IRON-RING

OLD GLOSSY PATINA

19TH CENTURY

SIZE: 8CM HIGH, 7.5CM WIDE, 5.5CM DEEP - 3⅛ INS HIGH, 3 INS WIDE, 2⅛ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

A PIGEON WHISTLE, KNOWN AS A 'GELING' OR 'GESHAO' IN CHINA, IS ATTACHED TO A PIGEON SUCH THAT IT EMITS A NOISE WHILST FLYING. THEY HAVE LONG BEEN USED IN ASIAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN CHINA, FOR ENTERTAINMENT, TRACKING AND TO DETER ATTACK BY BIRDS OF PREY. THE PRACTICE WAS ONCE COMMON BUT IS NOW MUCH LESS WIDESPREAD OWING TO INCREASING URBANISATION AND REGULATION OF PIGEON KEEPING. THEY HAVE BEEN USED IN CHINA SINCE AT LEAST THE QING DYNASTY (1644 - 1912).

A MODERN VERSION OF THE DEVICE, BASED ON SPECIMENS HELD AT THE PITT RIVERS MUSUEM IN OXFORD, HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY THE MUSICIAN NATHANIEL MANN. MANN HAS PERFORMED WITH THE DEVICES ATTACHED TO RACING PIGEONS AT FESTIVALS ACROSS THE UNITED KINGDOM.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE ENGLISH COLLECTION FORMED OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS