Finch & Co



NEOCLASSICAL PORTRAIT MINIATURE PAINTED ON IVORY 'ALL'ANTICA' OF A GENTLEMAN DEFRA PERMIT NUMBER: GJ3AB38X

AN UNUSUAL NEOCLASSICAL PORTRAIT MINIATURE PAINTED ON IVORY 'ALL'ANTICA' OF A GENTLEMAN IN A POSE INSPIRED BY AN ANTIQUE STATUE REPRESENTING A CLASSICAL ROMAN GOD OR EMPEROR

IN A ROSE GOLD MOUNT WITH PENDANT A BRISTOL BLUE GLASS REVERSE CONTAINED IN A PERIOD RED LEATHER VELVET LINED CASE

CIRCA 1790 - 1810

SIZE: 10.5CM HIGH, 3CM WIDE, 4.5CM DEEP - 4 INS HIGH, 1¼ INS WIDE, 1¾ INS DEEP

DEFRA PERMIT NUMBER: GJ3AB38X

AN UNUSUAL NEOCLASSICAL PORTRAIT MINIATURE PAINTED ON IVORY 'ALL'ANTICA' OF A GENTLEMAN IN A POSE INSPIRED BY AN ANTIQUE STATUE REPRESENTING A CLASSICAL ROMAN GOD OR EMPEROR

IN A ROSE GOLD MOUNT WITH PENDANT A BRISTOL BLUE GLASS REVERSE CONTAINED IN A PERIOD RED LEATHER VELVET LINED CASE

CIRCA 1790 - 1810

SIZE: 10.5CM HIGH, 3CM WIDE, 4.5CM DEEP - 4 INS HIGH, 1¼ INS WIDE, 1¾ INS DEEP

DEFRA PERMIT NUMBER: GJ3AB38X

LITERATURE

ONE OF THE MOST ORIGINAL AND CERTAIN MEANS OF FULFILLING THE DESIRE FOR FAME AND IMMORTALITY WAS THE PORTRAIT MINIATURE FOR WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THIS SMALL PORTABLE OBJECT WAS CONTAINED A WEALTH OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBJECT REPRESENTED. IN EARLIER TIMES DURING THE RENAISSANCE THE EUROPEAN CAST BRONZE, SILVER OR GOLD PORTRAIT MEDAL HAD THIS FUNCTION. USUALLY CIRCULAR, THEY NORMALLY HAD TWO SIDES: THE OBVERSE WITH A PORTRAIT AND IDENTIFYING INSCRIPTION AND THE REVERSE WITH A TEXT OR SCENE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SITTER. THE PORTRAIT MINIATURE PAINTED NORMALLY ON IVORY, ALTHOUGH NOT AS EASILY REPRODUCED, CAN BE SEEN AS THE DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE MEDAL WHICH DREW ON THE RICH HERITAGE OF IMPERIAL ROME, JUST AS THE NEOCLASSICAL PERIOD WAS CONNECTED TO THE REVALUATION OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY.

BOTH PORTRAIT MINIATURES AND MEDALS WERE VERY PERSONAL OBJECTS. THEY ARE MEANT TO INFORM US ABOUT THE SUBJECT AS THEY OR OTHERS WISHED US TO PERCEIVE THEM. THE MESSAGE BEGINS WITH THE SUBJECTS BEARING AND DRESS, IN STRICTEST REALISM OR IDEALISED, THE PORTRAIT THEREBY CONVEYING THE SITTER'S ASPIRATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR JUST SELF-SATISFACTION. MUCH MORE PORTABLE THAN PAINTED PORTRAITS OR SCULPTURE, MINIATURES BECAME AN ENDURING MEANS OF ATTAINING EARTHLY IMMORTALITY.