Finch & Co



A RARE AND IMPORTANT SARCOPHAGUS 'WEDDING' CASKET

A RARE AND IMPORTANT SARCOPHAGUS 'WEDDING' CASKET

ATTRIBUTED TO THE EMBRIACHI WORKSHOP / AND THE SO CALLED:

MASTER OF THE 'SUSANNA TWO'

BONE, WOOD, POLYCHROME, METAL

VENICE, ITALY

15TH CENTURY / CIRCA 1450 - 75

SIZE: 25CM HIGH, 41CM WIDE, 26.5 DEEP - 9¾ INS HIGH, 16¼ INS WIDE, 10½ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THE EMBRIACHI WORKSHOP WAS A NORTH ITALIAN FAMILY OF ENTREPRENEURS AND CARVERS. THE PRECISE LOCATION OF THE WORKSHOP IS UNKNOWN, EXCEPT THAT IT ORIGINATED IN FLORENCE IN AROUND PROBABLY THE 1370'S. BALDASSARE EMBRIACHI, WAS A MEMBER OF A FLORENTINE NOBLE FAMILY, AND THE FLORENTINE LITERARY CIRCLES, DURING HIS CAREER HE ACTED AS BOTH MERCHANT AND DIPLOMAT. HIS CONNECTIONS AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE ALLOWED HIM TO SET UP AND FOUND THE BONE-CARVING WORKSHOP THAT BEARS HIS NAME.

BY 1395, POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES HAD FORCED HIM TO TRANSFER THE WORKSHOP TO VENICE. THE SUGGESTED TIME RANGE OF WORKSHOPS ACTIVITY DOES DIFFER, FROM THE EARLIEST KNOWN DATE BEING 1390 - 1405.

THEY EMPLOYED LOCAL WORKERS SPECIALISING IN 'CERTOSINA' (INLAY OF STAINED WOODS, BONE AND HORN), AND THE WORKSHOP PRODUCED ITEMS CARVED IN BONE (USUALLY HORSE OR OX) WITH WOOD AND BONE MARQUETRY. AS WELL AS ALTARPIECES, THE WORKSHOP ALSO MADE CASKETS AS BRIDAL GIFTS TO HOLD JEWELS OR DOCUMENTS, AND THESE WERE OFTEN DECORATED WITH SCENES FROM MYTHOLOGY.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION, USA

EX ENGLISH COLLECTION

CF:

THE ‘SUSANNA TWO’ ARE TWO VERY SIMILAR CASKETS HOUSED IN THE MUSEUM OF RAVENNA, ITALY, MADE BY THE SAME WORKSHOP AND MASTER AS OUR FINE SARCOPHAGUS.