

Finch & C^o



MR PUNCH WALKING CANE

A 'PUNCHY' MR PUNCH WALKING STAFF / SWAGGER STICK

WOOD, GLASS EYES

EARLY 19TH CENTURY

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SIZE: 106CMLONG, 15CMWIDE (HEAD) - 41³/₄ INS LONG, 5³/₄ INS WIDE (HEAD)

LITERATURE

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE, A THEATRICAL TRADITION ORIGINATING IN MANNERIST ITALY, EMPLOYED EXAGGERATED FACIAL FEATURES. THE NEAPOLITAN TRADITION INTRODUCED PULCINELLA, A PROMINENT STAGE FIGURE WHOSE MASK

FEATURED A DEFORMED NOSE. THIS NOSE BECAME THE BASIS FOR 'MR. PUNCH', AN ENGLISH COMEDY FIGURE THAT CONTINUES TO BE POPULAR TODAY.

IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY, PUPPET THEATRES, FEATURING ENGLISH INTERPRETATIONS OF COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE CHARACTERS SUCH AS 'PUNCH AND JUDY', 'SCARAMOUCHE', AND 'PANTALONE', ENJOYED IMMENSE POPULARITY. MARTIN POWELL'S PUPPET THEATRE AT COVENT GARDEN WAS PARTICULARLY RENOWNED, ATTRACTING SUBSTANTIAL CROWDS.

THE SIZE AND FINELY CARVED HEAD, OF IMMENSE SIZE, PERHAPS SUGGESTS THIS EXTRAORDINARY CANE WAS ALSO USED AS A 'SWAGGER' STICK AS WELL AS A WALKING CANE, TO TIE THE OWNERS BELONGING AROUND THE TOP SECTION OF THE STAFF AND CARRY ACROSS THE SHOULDER.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION, MR DEREK GREENGRASS, NOTED COLLECTOR AND DEALER IN WALKING CANES