

Finch & C^o



RARE ANCIENT ROMAN MARBLE HEAD OF A GROTESQUE NUBIAN DWARF

A CURIOUS RARE ANCIENT ROMAN MARBLE HEAD OF A GROTESQUE NUBIAN DWARF DISPLAYING SIGNS OF
ACHONDROPLASIA

PROBABLY ALEXANDRIAN

1ST - 2ND CENTURY AD

SIZE: 34CM HIGH, 21CM WIDE, 23.5CM DEEP - 13½ INS HIGH, 8¼ INS WIDE, 9¼ INS DEEP / 46CM HIGH - 18 INS HIGH (WITH
BASE)

LITERATURE

THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS PERCEIVED DWARFS AS SPECIAL PEOPLE WITH SIGNIFICANT SACRED ASSOCIATIONS AND OWNING A DWARF CONFERRED HIGH SOCIAL STATUS. EQUALLY DWARFS ENJOYED A GOOD STANDARD OF LIVING OFTEN BEING EMPLOYED IN THE TEMPLES. AMONGST THE IMPERIAL ROMAN ELITE THEY ALSO ENJOYED PRIVILEGE AND PRESTIGE. JULIA, THE NIECE OF THE EMPEROR AUGUSTUS KEPT A DWARF CALLED COROPAS WHO MEASURED TWO FEET FOUR INCHES HIGH, AND A MAID ANDROMEDA WHO WAS ALMOST AS SMALL.

PHYSICALLY DEFORMED THEY WERE POPULAR AS ENTERTAINERS IN GREECE AND ROME PROVIDING A VAUDEVILLE REPERTOIRE OF PLAYLETS MIMICKING EVERYDAY SITUATIONS. AS MIME ARTISTS IN ANCIENT ROME THEY DEPICTED THE LIFE OF THE LOWER CLASSES AND IT WAS THEIR CHIEF AIM TO ROUSE THE LAUGHTER OF THE SPECTATORS IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY. THEY WERE FULL OF OBSCENE EXPRESSIONS AND ABOUNDED IN THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS BUFFOONERY, CHEATING AND ADULTERY WERE THE FAVOURITE SUBJECTS. TOGETHER WITH PANTOMIMES, THEY ENJOYED THE GREATEST POPULARITY DURING THE EMPIRE.