Finch & Co



BYZANTINE SILVER AND GOLD INLAID PENDANT CROSS

A FINE BYZANTINE SILVER AND GOLD INLAID PENDANT CROSS WITH FLARING ARMS EACH DECORATED WITH A SMALL GOLD PECTORAL CROSS

PROBABLY MADE FOR A BISHOP OR AN ABBOT

CONSTANTINOPLE OR SYRIA

SUPERB CONDITION

8TH - 9TH CENTURY A.D

SIZE: 8CM HIGH, 5.5CM WIDE - 3 INS HIGH, 2¼ INS WIDE

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LITERATURE

IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN PERIOD IT WAS COMMON FOR CHRISTIANS TO WEAR AN 'ENKOLPION': A CROSS, MEDALLION OR RELIC HOLDER ON A CHAIN OR CORD AROUND THE NECK AS A SOURCE OF DIVINE FAVOUR OR BLESSING. PENDANT CROSSES WERE AMONGST THE MOST POPULAR AND WERE MADE FROM THE 6TH CENTURY ONWARDS. THEY WERE PRODUCED IN A VARIETY OF MATERIALS AND IN VARIOUS SHAPES AND SIZES. THEY WERE USED AT EVERY LEVEL OF SOCIETY, BUT EXAMPLES SUCH AS THIS WERE PARTICULARLY USED BY THE BISHOPS AND HIGHER CLERGY IN THE 8TH AND 9TH CENTURIES DURING THE PERIOD OF ICONOCLASM WHEN FIGURATIVE REPRESENTATION WAS FORBIDDEN BY THE ORTHODOX CHURCH. THE UNDECORATED FORM OF THE CROSS WAS REVERED AS A SIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

PROVENANCE

EX UK PRIVATE COLLECTION ACQUIRED EARLY 1980'S

EX PRIVATE ENGLISH COLLECTION ACQUIRED FROM RUPERT WACE ANCIENT ART LONDON 2010 WITH ACCOMPANYING 'ART LOSS REGISTER CERTIFICATE'