Finch & Co



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ATTRIBUTED TO THE WORKSHOP OF GRINLING GIBBONS (1648 - 1721)

WOOD, (LATER) PAINT

ENGLISH

LATE 17TH TO EARLY 18TH CENTURY

SIZE: 26CM HIGH, 23CM WIDE, 8.5CM DEEP AND 25CM HIGH, 23CM WIDE, 7.5CM DEEP

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LITERATURE

A DRAWING BY SAMUEL WATSON, CIRCA 1685-95, FROM A SKETCHBOOK HOUSED AT CHATSWORTH HOUSE, DERBYSHIRE, DEPICTS A VERY CLOSE RELATED 'GROUPING' OF HUNG FISH, DRAWN FROM GIBBONS'S ST JAMES'S ALTAR PIECE DESIGN FOR A PROPOSAL FOR A 'GAME' OVERMANTEL.

GRINLING GIBBONS (1648 - 1721) WAS AN OUTSTANDING WOOD CARVER WHO BY 1680 HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO CHARLES II AND MADE 'THE KING'S CARVER'. ALTHOUGH HE ALSO WORKED IN MARBLE, STONE AND BRONZE; VERTUE SAYS THAT 'HE WAS NEITHER WELL SKILLED OR PRACTISED IN MARBLE OR BRONZE FOR WHICH WORK HE EMPLOYED THE BEST ARTISTS HE COULD PROCURE'.

HIS WOOD CARVING WAS SO FINE THAT IT WAS SAID A POT OF CARVED FLOWERS ABOVE HIS HOUSE IN LONDON WOULD TREMBLE FROM THE MOTION OF PASSING COACHES. HE WAS EMPLOYED BY SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN TO WORK ON ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL AND WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WOOD WORK ON THE CHOIR STALLS, CHOIR SCREEN AND ORGAN CASE, AS WELL AS AN ALTAR PIECE WHICH WAS BOMB DAMAGED DURING THE BLITZ IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

DEAD GAME WAS A RECURRING THEME OF GIBBONS'S WORK AND OUTPUT. THE HIGHLY REALISTIC 'TROMPE-L'ŒIL' (OPTICAL ILLUSION) THREE DIMENSIONAL CARVINGS OF HANGING FOWL, FISH AND OTHER GAME WERE A 'TRADEMARK' OF HIS STYLE, AS CAN BE SEEN IN THE OVERMANTEL AT SUDBURY HALL, DERBYSHIRE OF 1678; THE OVERMANTEL BADMINTON HOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, OF 1683; AND MORE CLOSELY RELATED THE 'SIDE DROP' FROM THE ORIGINAL BADMINTON HOUSE OVERMANTEL, NOW HUNG SEPARATELY DEPICTING A GROUPING OF 'TROMPE-L'ŒIL' FISH. ONE SHOULD ALSO COMPARE CLOSELY THE KIRTLINGTON PANEL, CIRCA 1690 - 1700, KIRTLINGTON PARK.