



## Northern Italy - 17th Century - Bronze Memento Mori Skull



1 800 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

Width : 5.5

Height : 8.5

Depth : 11.5

### Description

A splendid cast-bronze vanitas depicting a skull pierced by a dagger, the tip of which emerges from the jawbone to form a tongue. Given the object's unusual nature and its high-quality craftsmanship, it must have been part of a cultured study. With the Counter-Reformation, in fact, the theme of Memento Mori was reinforced, along with a stricter emphasis on the observance and respect for moral rules. The cultured study rooms of the Counter-Reformation were, in fact, the perfect setting for objects that explored this theme, exalting it and sometimes even transcending its precepts. The tip of the sword, which becomes a tongue, can in fact be seen as a way to exorcise the theme of death--a theme initially emphasized by the blade violently piercing the skull. While the weapon's violence

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both exalts and terrifies, the tongue unsettles and mocks. This is not a skull like any other, but a variation on the theme of death that is exceptionally rare and exquisite. The interior is hollow and shows no signs of assembly, confirming that the object was created as a study-room sculpture and not as part of another artifact. The wear and patina, as well as the S-shaped guard and the pommel of the dagger, confirm a date between the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Judging by the modeling of the skull, the casting was made from a wax model. Dimensions: 11.5 x 5.5 x 8.5 cm (H)