



18th Century Silver-mounted Cowrie Shell Snuffbox Circa 1750

575 EUR



Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Description

18th century silver-mounted cowrie shell snuffbox
Cowrie shell, silver mounts, gilded on the inside
7.5 cm long, 5.3 cm wide, 4 cm high
Provenance: private collection, The Netherlands
*A beautiful and rare snuff box made from a natural cowrie shell, set in an exquisite silver mount, dating to around 1750. The silver mount is expertly custom-made and perfectly follows the organic contours of the shell, lending the box an elegant and natural appearance. This distinctive snuff box bears no hallmarks, which is not unusual for pieces of this type. Such boxes were especially popular in England, Ireland and Scotland. Popular throughout history, the very rounded, shiny, porcelain-like shells of cowries are pleasing to look at and to handle. The term 'porcelain' derives from the old Italian term for

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the cowrie shell (porcellana) due to their similar translucent appearance. Shells of certain species have historically been used as currency in several parts of the world, as well as being used extensively for jewellery, and for other decorative and ceremonial purposes. Very unusual to also have shell motifs on the silver mounts. Very good conditionShipping in Europe: EUR 15