Commode Minature Long Walnut Maltese Cross Ebonised Fruitwood

£4,500

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REF: 11759

Height: 24 cm (9.4")

Width: 27 cm (10.6")

Depth: 20 cm (7.9")

Description

An exceptionally rare, museum quality Maltese, Neoclassical walnut chest of drawers with ebonised & fruitwood inlaid maltese cross on the top and drawer fronts

Maltese furniture of this period is exceptional reflecting the status and affluence of the island. Given the size of the island relatively little Maltese furniture was made in comparison to Europe & American mainland. Minature furniture is rare made either as a model or an apprentice's piece so it is extremely rare to find a minature piece from Malta bearing the Maltese cross. This minature commode is highly original with beautiful proportions, ornamentation and patination.

The 'H' shaped top with a large centered inlaid Maltese Cross and a border of stringing. The breakfront fitted with three drawers each with stringing and inlaid six point stars centrally positioned behind the wooden knobs. The uprights with two continuous vertical bands of stringing ebonised and fruitwood from the top to the bottom of the drawers in walnut to match the front of the chest and then reverting to ebonising and fruitwood down the feet. Terminating in tapering feet. The panelled sides with a repeat of the double banding on the uprights and rectangular borders within the panels. The oak lined drawers with the original 18th century blue paper lining.

Measures: length 27 cm 10 1/2", height 24 cm 9 1/2", depth 20 cm 8".

Maltese Cross: The Maltese cross is a symbol that is most commonly associated with the Knights of Malta (also known as the Knights Hospitallers), who ruled the Maltese islands between 1530 and 1798. The Maltese cross is nowadays widely used and associated with Malta featuring on the Maltese Euro coins. The shape of the Maltese cross is star-like with four V-shaped arms that are joined together at the tips. It's frequently used either in black and white or red and white and is symmetrical both vertically as well as horizontally. The Maltese cross formally adopted by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John in 1126, stylistically owes its origins to the crosses used in the crusades, when it was identified as the symbol of the "Christian warrior": Its eight points denote the eight obligations or aspirations of the knights, namely "to live in truth, have faith, repent one's sins, give proof of humility, love justice, be merciful, be sincere and whole-hearted, and to endure persecution". With time, the eight points also came to represent the eight langues (or "tongues", but in effect national groupings) of the noblemen who were admitted to the famed order, namely those of Auvergne, Provence, France, Aragon, Castille and Portugal, Italy, Baviere (Germany), and England (with Scotland and Ireland). As part of its present-day teachings, the cross represents eight beatitudes (or 'blessings'). A good first aider in service of the Order of St. John is Observant, Tactful, Resourceful, Dextrous, Explicit, Discriminating, Persevering and Sympathetic.

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