Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Early 18th-Century Lead Memento Mori Crucifix

£165

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REF: 7319

Height: 35 cm (13.8")

Width: 18 cm (7.1")

Depth: 1 cm (0.4")

Description

An evocative early 18th-century cast lead crucifix, dating to circa 1700 and incorporating powerful memento mori symbolism. Modest in scale yet rich in devotional meaning, this remarkable object reflects the deeply contemplative character of Catholic religious art in the Baroque period.

Cast in lead, the crucifix has a compellingly tactile, time-softened surface and a direct, unpretentious presence. The inclusion of memento mori motifs-reminders of mortality and the transience of earthly life-adds a further layer of spiritual significance. In Christian devotional tradition, such imagery encouraged the viewer to contemplate death, redemption, and the promise of resurrection through Christ's sacrifice.

Lead was a practical and widely used material for small religious objects, offering sculptors the ability to achieve detailed relief at comparatively low cost. Its subdued grey patina has developed naturally over centuries, lending the piece an austere beauty well suited to its subject. The form and iconography suggest a crucifix intended for private prayer, a domestic altar, or perhaps a small chapel setting.

A compelling survival from the early 18th century, combining devotional art, folk craftsmanship, and the enduring visual language of *memento mori*. It would make an atmospheric addition to a collection of early religious art, ecclesiastical metalwork, devotional objects, or curiosities with a Gothic and historical sensibility.

Cast lead; circa 1700. Please refer to the photographs for condition, dimensions, and the full detail of the iconography.

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