

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Edwardian silver & tortoiseshell jewel box

William Comyns

Sold



REF: 2331

Height: 50 mm (1.97")

Width: 160 mm (6.3")

Depth: 115 mm (4.53")

Description

Stunning antique silver trinket box with beautifully inlaid tortoiseshell lid, decorated with elegant neoclassical motifs and foliate scrolls, of oblong form, with incurved sides, raised on four foliate scroll feet. The tortoiseshell is in excellent original condition is a desirable deep rich colour. The interior is lined with satin.

Neoclassicism was born in Rome in the mid-18th century before spreading throughout Europe. It is the name given to Western movements in the arts and architecture that draw inspiration from the "classical" art and culture of Ancient Greece or Rome.

The technique used on this box is called piqué, where gold or silver is inlaid into another material, in this case silver on tortoiseshell. Despite being expensive, the use of tortoiseshell in the decorative arts was very popular in 18th and 19th century Europe. Not only did it have a beautiful mottled appearance and was durable, but it was also lightweight and could be easily fashioned into other shapes; jewellery boxes and tea caddies were prime examples.

Tortoiseshell is quite malleable when heated, so when very fine gold, or in this case silver, was fashioned into delicate designs and then pressed into the warmed tortoiseshell, the silver then cooled and the shell contracted to hold the silver in place.