

Skull Lapis Lazuli Sculpture Minature

£1,350



REF: 11500

Height: 4.5 cm (1.8")

Width: 5 cm (2")

Depth: 4.5 cm (1.8")

## Description

- Late 19th-early 20th century lapis lazuli skull - Object of curiosity and wonder from a collector's cabinet of curiosities and wonder. Measures: 2" long, 1.75" high

Cabinets of curiosities reflected the particular interests of their owners and were social devices of status, connoisseurship and wealth. As R. J. W. Evans notes, there was the "the princely cabinet, serving a largely representational function, and dominated by aesthetic concerns and a marked predilection for the exotic," and the less grandiose, "the more modest collection of the humanist scholar or virtuoso, which served more practical and scientific purposes."

The most common symbolic use of the skull is as a representation of death, mortality and the unachievable nature of immortality. They also represent transformation and change, wealth, power, strength and protection. A more subtle meaning is vanity. In 1892 Charles Allan Gilbert used the form of a skull to represent vanity, showing a lady sitting at a dressing table looking at herself in the mirror. The components of the composition come together to create the outline of a skull. This clever depiction encourages viewers to look beneath the surface value of a piece (much like looking beneath the vain exterior of an individual), creating the idea that both the subject and the viewer are practising vain ideals.

The beautiful blue stone lapis lazuli has been highly prized for thousands of years. Scholars believe many early historical references to sapphire may actually refer to samples of lapis lazuli. Jewelry made from this lazurite-rich rock has been found in prehistoric tombs in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Not surprisingly, lapis lazuli symbolism stretches back in time for millennia. Many ancient civilizations prized lapis lazuli. To them, the stone had religious significance and reflected the high status of their rulers. Today, some people associate lapis lazuli with wisdom, love, and healing and claim it nurtures and promotes psychic ability. Measures: Height 4.5cm Length 5cm Depth 4.5cm.