An important & very unusual george iii gold snuff box, the cover inset with a portrait miniature in the manner of charles shirreff. English circa 1785-90.

Sold



REF: 374754

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Description

The box is of a very good weight and has a deep navette shaped form. The base has a very unusual concave surface and the edges of the cover, base and sides are engraved with a band of foliate scrolls and prick dot designs. The cover opens up to reveal a contemporary portrait miniature, of a naval officer, surrounded by an oval bright cut frame. The box is in quite excellent condition, as is the miniature. The miniature is in the manner of Charles Shirreff (c1750-1829) who was a deaf Scottish painter specialising in portrait miniatures. Shirreff studied art at the Royal Academy Schools and graduated in 1772. Shirreff worked in London after graduating from the Royal Academy, building up a clientele that was mainly theatrical. He befriended Caleb Whiteford, a well-connected Scottish merchant, diplomat, and political satirist who moved in London's wealthiest elite circles, where Shirreff developed advantageous associations with portraitists, Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Dance the Younger, and Richard Cosway. Shirreff lived and worked in Bath 1791-95 and 1786-1800. His sitters included actreee Sarah Siddons, who wrote of him as more successful in her portrait than any other miniature painter she had sat to. The unusual design, portrait and condition makes this example of museum importance.Length: 3.9 inches, 9.75 cm.Width: 2.1 inches, 5.25 cm.Depth: 0.9 inches, 2.25 cmWeight: 8oz.

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