

A very rare Queen Anne/George I silver and mother of pearl mounted tortoiseshell snuff box made almost certainly in London circa 1714 by John Swann.

Sold



Description

As you will appreciate it is almost impossible to know who made silver mounted tortoiseshell snuff boxes as they are never marked, however the one we are offering, we have no doubt was made in London circa 1714 by John Swann. As you will see from the images, this piece has a slender oval form with silver sides decorated with reeding. The base is inset with a plain tortoiseshell panel and the cover is also inset with a tortoiseshell panel, with silver and mother of pearl overlay pierced and engraved. The design is quite distinctive and is contained within a twisted ropework frame. The centre depicts a canopy at the top, below architectural scroll work. Two mother of pearl male figures on each side appear to hold up the silver scrolls, next to exotic birds and bluebell garlands. The base also displays two squirrels eating nuts, at the bottom of the scene. The box is in very good condition. The design is very reminiscent of the silver box in our archive with a theatre scene on the cover, also by John Swann, and the box illustrated in the catalogue of the Lion collection on page 105. It would appear that the style is very much like the work of John Swann, which is why we firmly attribute it to him and with the squirrels always present, they represent a sort of figurative signature of his work. Length: 3.1 inches, 7.75 inches. Width: 2.45 inches, 6.13 cm. Depth: 0.45 inches, 1.13 cm