

# PATRICK JEFFERSON



## MANNERIST CARVED MARBLE CORNER CAPITAL

Italy *circa* 1550.

Provenance: acquired in Italy around 1900 by Lehmann or Otto Bernheimer; thence by descent.

Height 17¼" (44cm)

Width 21½" (55cm)

Depth 16⅛" (41cm)

*The abacus with grotesque masks, above cabochon and bead and reel mouldings, surmounting volutes and swags of pendant fruit; weathered, losses; mounted on a bespoke patinated bronze base.*

This vigorously carved marble was purchased in Italy at the turn of the twentieth century by Otto Bernheimer or his father Lehmann Bernheimer, a supplier to the royal Bavarian court who started the family business in Munich in 1864, dealing in Old Master paintings, ancient sculpture, and works of art. Their sculpture collection, including this capital, was originally displayed in the 'Steinkelle', the basement on Lenbachplatz which was dedicated to stones and marbles; from there it was moved to the Italian Courtyard at Palais Bernheimer, before finally being stored at Burg Marquartstein in Bavaria.

This powerful capital depicts Mannerist elements that theatrically extend the Italian Renaissance in a rich and extravagant manner, using a plethora of fantastical ornamentation combined with the grammar of classical antiquity. An example of this movement can be seen in a series of twelve portraits engraved in Paris in 1545-49 by Pierre Milan, after drawings attributed to Léonard Thiry (in the *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts*, Paris), possibly using a model given by Rosso Fiorentino adapted for the engraving (fig. 1). E.A. Carroll suggested that the masks were not models for costumes, as most people assumed, but rather projects for 'pictures of masks out of coloured stones, probably to decorate the walls or pavement of a room... at [the Palace of] Fontainebleau' (V&A no. 29340:6).

£18,000

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fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3