Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Russian Vishnyakov Lacquer Jewellery Box, Circa 1870

£145

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REF: 7527

Height: 5 cm (2")

Width: 15 cm (5.9")

Depth: 10 cm (3.9")

Description

A finely painted 19th-century Russian papier-mâché lacquer jewellery box, attributed to the Vishnyakov workshop and dating to circa 1870. The hinged lid is decorated with an elaborate grand supper scene, richly populated with elegantly dressed figures gathered around a lavishly laid table. The theatrical composition, warm palette, and minute painted detail capture the conviviality and splendour of aristocratic Russian life.

The box is finished in the deep, glossy black lacquer associated with Russian papier-mâché work of the period, providing a dramatic ground for the finely painted scene. Its gently rounded form and polished surface enhance its jewel-like quality, while the narrative decoration transforms an intimate domestic object into a small work of art.

The Vishnyakov family workshop was among the most respected makers of Russian lacquerware in the 19th century. Working in the tradition centred around Fedoskino, its artists became known for their delicate miniature painting, often drawing on scenes of fashionable society, literature, folklore, and daily life. Boxes such as this were prized both for their practical use and as objects of display.

An evocative example of Russian decorative art, this charming box would make a distinctive addition to a collection of antique lacquerware, Russian objets d'art, or finely painted 19th-century boxes. It is equally compelling as a decorative piece, offering a vivid glimpse into the ceremony, sociability, and craftsmanship of Imperial Russia.

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