



### A ROCK CRYSTAL ENAMELLED GOLD BOX , ALGERNON ASPREY LTD

Era: XX century, 1975.

Materials: rock crystal, gold, enamel.

Dim: W 3.5 in / D 2.5 in / H 1.5 in.

Master goldsmith: Algernon Asprey.

Letter-date from Sheffield 1975.

Oval-shaped rock crystal box with hinged lid featuring a rose and leaf enameled flower on which sits a gold butterfly with pierced wings. The cage mount imitates ropes. The bottom of the box is engraved 'Designed & enamelled by Philip Barnes, made by Ron Edwards for Algernon Asprey / Algernon Asprey Bruton Street London'. Gold 18 carats.

**Algernon Asprey** was the sixth generations of the family whose name has become internationally known for fine design and craftsmanship. His father encouraged him to develop his artistic talent and after leaving Charterhouse he spent four years at the Polytechnic School of Art on Regent Street. He joined the family firm as an artist and designer in 1933 and acquired such a reputation as an outstanding designer and goldsmith that he was able to leave the family business in 1971 to set up his own firm, Alergnon Asprey Ltd of 27 Bruton Street. His aim was to 're-establish craftmanship as it existed in the 18th century. (...) During the 1880s large workshops were built and a specialist craftman would spend all day fashioning spoon bowls, for instance, which would be finished by another person, rather than one man creating the entire item from start to finish. This assembly-line piecework caused the disintegration of the crafts in their pureste sense.' Asprey worked with well over 100 craftmen in small workshop throughout the country, as well as his own nucleus of craftmen in London. Algernon Asprey also designed royal apartments in the Middle East. The firm stopped when Algernon Asprey died.