



Indian Peshkabz Dagger with Agate Grip

Mughal India, 18th century

Banded agate, watered steel, gold

39.5cm long (overall), 28cm long (the blade)

Stock no.: A5849

Provenance: Australian private collection since at least 1990.

The *peshkabz* originated in Safavid Iran but became popular in the Mughal Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. The name is thought to come from the front girdle worn by Persian wrestlers, indicating that the *peshkabz* was worn centrally as opposed to other blades which were worn at the side. Characterised by its recurved blade which tapers to a needle-like tip, the *peshkabz* was designed to pierce through mail armour.

This example comes from Mughal India. It has a full tang fitted with a grip of agate, the banded form of the mineral chalcedony. The agate is various shades of brown and blond. It is secured to the tang with five gold pins in the form of flowers. The blade is of fine *wootz* (watered/Damascus steel), with pronounced spine which gives a T cross section. The blade is much straighter than a typical Safavid *peshkabz*, indicating that this is an Indian example.