Bead - St Jerome and St Catherine of Alexandria

Object: Bead

Place of origin: Netherlands (possibly, northern, made)
Lower Rhine (possibly, made)

Date: ca. 1500 (made)

Artist/Maker: Unknown

Materials and Techniques: Boxwood

Museum number: 6921-1860

Gallery location: Sculpture, Room 111, The Gilbert Bayes Gallery, case 9, shelf 2

Public access description
Throughout the ages artists and craftsmen have made virtuoso carvings as a display of their skill and ingenuity. Although ivory, wood and stone are relatively easy to carve, other materials such as gemstones are much more demanding. Most of these carvings were made for wealthy patrons and collectors, who delighted in the rarity of the material and quality of the carving. The intricately carved pendant once hung from a rosary. Popular from the 1450s onwards, a rosary was a string of prayer beads used during prayer and contemplation. The beads were dedicated to the 15 Mysteries of the Life of Christ. Elaborate yet microscopic rosary pendants were fashionable between about 1480 and 1520.

Descriptive line
Rosary bead, boxwood, by an unknown artist, probably Northern Netherlands or Lower Rhine, ca. 1500

Museum number
6921-1860

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O58632/st-jerome-and-st-catherine-bead-unknown/